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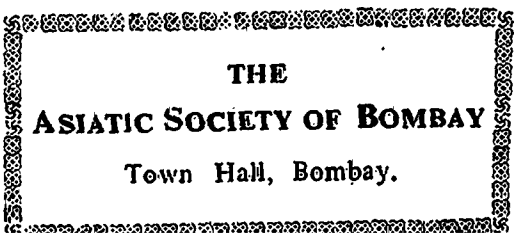

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THE

RELIGIOUS LIFE OF LONDON.

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RELIGIOUS LIFE OF LONDON.

BY

J. EWING RITCHIE,

AUTHOR OF "BRITISH SENATORS," "THE NIGHT SIDE OF LONDON," ETC.

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"'Tis Nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
Of form created the most vile and brute,
The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good."

WORDSWORTH.

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TO

SAMUEL MORLEY, Esq., M.P.

TO WHOSE UNEXAMPLED ACTIVITY AND MUNIFICENCE

(BY NO MEANS CONFINED WITHIN HIS OWN DENOMINATION)

MUCH OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF LONDON IS DUE,

THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

MAN is undoubtedly a religious animal. In England at any rate the remark holds good. No one who ignores the religious element in our history can rightly understand what England was, or how she came to be what she is. The fuller is our knowledge, the wider our field of investigation, the more minute our inquiry, the stronger must be the conviction in all minds that religion has been for good or bad the great moving power, and, in spite of the teachings of Secularism or of Positivism, it is clear that as much as ever the questions which are daily and hourly coming to the front have in them more or less of a religious element. It is not often foreigners perceive this. Take Louis Blanc as an illustration. As much as any foreigner he has mastered our habits and ways—all that we call our inner life; yet, to him, the English pulpit is a piece of wood—nothing more. According to him, the oracles are dumb, the sacred fire has ceased to burn, the veil of the temple is rent in twain; church attendance, he tells us, in England, besides custom, has little to recommend it. There is beauty in desolation—in life changing into death—

> "Before Decay's effacing fingers
> Have swept the lines where beauty lingers;"

but not even of this beauty can the Church of England boast. Dr. Döllinger—a more thoughtful, a more learned, a more laborious writer—is not more flattering. The Church of England, he tells us, is "the Church only of a fragment of the nation," of "the rich, cultivated, and fashionable classes." It teaches "the religion of deportment, of gentility, of clerical reserve." "In its stiff and narrow organization, and all want of pastoral elasticity, it feels itself powerless against the masses." The patronage is mostly in the hands of the nobility and gentry, who regard it as a means of provision for their younger sons, sons-in-law, and cousins. Our latest critic, M. Esquiros, writes in a more favourable strain, yet even he confesses how the city operative shuns what he deems the Church of Mammon, and draws a picture of the English clergyman, by no means suggestive of zeal in the Master's service or readiness to bear His yoke. Dissent foreigners generally ignore, yet Dissent is as active, as energetic as the State Church, and may claim that it has practically realized the question of our time—the Free Church in the Free State. In thus attempting to describe the Religious Life of London, I touch on a question of which I may briefly say that it concerns the welfare of the community at large.

Ivy Cottage, Ballard's Lane, Finchley,
April 4th, 1870.

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RELIGIOUS LIFE OF LONDON.

CHAPTER I.

ON HERESY AND ORTHODOXY.

THE original meaning of the word heresy is choice. "It was long used," writes Dr. Waddington, "by the philosophers to designate the preference and selection of some speculative opinion, and in process of time was applied without any sense of reproach to every sect." The most fruitful source of speculative opinion is, and has ever been, religion; from the schools of philosophy to those of theology the term heresy passed by a very intelligible and simple process. The word is thrice used in the Acts to denote sect (Acts v. 17, xv. 5, and xxiv. 5), and Paul himself when on his defence before Felix and in answer to Tertullus confesses that "after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers."

In process of time heresy came to have a bad

meaning attached to it. It is easy to see why this should be so. We naturally prefer our own opinions to those of other people. We naturally prefer the society of those who hold our own opinions to the society of those who do not. Life is short, and we do not want to be always disputing. Life to most of us is hard, and it would be harder still if after a day's toil Paterfamilias had to discuss the three births of Christ, or His twofold nature, the Æons of the Gnostics, the Judaism of the Ebionites, the ancient Persian dualism which formed the fundamental idea of the system of Manes, or the windy frenzy of Montanus, with an illogical wife, a friend gifted with a fatal flow of words, or a pert and shallow child. We like those with whom we constantly associate. They are wise men and sound Christians. They are those who fast and pay tithes, and are eminently proper and respectable. As to the heretics—the publicans and sinners, away with them. Let their portion be shame in this life, perdition in the next. Thus it is heretics have got a bad name. Church history has been written by their enemies, by men who have honestly believed that a man of a different heresy to their own would rob an orphan, and break all the commandments. The Rev. Mr. Thwackem "doubted

not but all the infidels and heretics in the world would, if they could, confine honour to their own absurd errors and damnable deceptions." The phrase "absurd errors and damnable deceptions," is one a real theologian might envy, or at any rate appropriate. In another sense also that hero of fiction is a type of the spirit in which orthodox people often (thankfully we record the existence of a better spirit in our day) have written on theology. "When I mean religion," cries Thwackem, "I mean the Christian religion, and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion, and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England."

Still the question occurs, What is heresy?

It is not difficult to say what it is not. The African Bishops on one occasion, in council in Carthage, decided that heretics were not at all any part of the Church of Christ, but this opinion was modified by a later council. "Heretics," writes Epiphanius, "are divided into two kinds: those who receive the Christian religion, but err in parts, who when they come over to the Church are anointed with oil; and those who do not receive it at all and are unbelievers, such as Jews and Greeks, and these we baptize."

According to the Articles of the English Establish-

ment, "the Church of Christ is a company of faithful people among whom the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments rightly administered according to Christ's institution." But on this very matter we find the Church divided. Low Churchmen tell us that the ritualists do not rightly administer the Sacraments, and the latter say the same of their opponents. The *Record* suggests that Bishop Colenso is little better than one of the wicked, and charitably insinuates that the late Dean Milman is amongst the lost. Dr. Pusey places the Evangelicals in the same category with Jews, or Infidels, or Dissenters, and has strong apprehensions as to their everlasting salvation. Dr. Temple was made Bishop of Exeter, and Archdeacon Denison set apart the day of his installation as one of humiliation and prayer. Yet all these are of the Establishment. Dr. Parr gladly associated with Unitarians, and went to Unitarian chapels to hear Unitarian ministers preach. Would Dean Close do so? Yet Dr. Parr, as much as Dean Close, was of the Church as regards solemn profession, and deliberate assent and consent. Mr. Melville believes Dissent to be schism, and one of the deadly sins, while the Deans of Westminster and Canterbury hold out to Dissenters friendly hands. If we take the Articles,

the Church Establishment is as orthodox as the firmest Christian or the narrowest-minded bigot can desire; if we turn to its ministers, we find them as divided as it is possible for people professing to take their teaching from the Bible can be. If there be any grace in creeds and articles, any virtue in signing them, if their imposition be not a solemn farce, it is impossible that heresy should exist within the Established Church. It is in the wide and varied fields of Dissent that we are to look for heresy.

Yet the Church of England is tolerant, to a certain extent, of heresy. The judicious Hooker writes, "We must acknowledge even heretics themselves to be a maimed part, yet a part, of the visible Church. If an infidel should pursue to death an heretic professing Christianity only for Christian profession's sake, could we deny unto him the honour of martyrdom? Yet this honour all men know to be proper unto the Church. Heretics, therefore, are not utterly cast out from the visible Church of Christ. If the Fathers do, therefore, anywhere, as often they do, make the true visible Church of Christ and heretical companies opposite, they are to be construed as separating heretics not altogether from the company of

believers, but from the fellowship of sound believers. For where professed unbelief is, there can be no visible Church of Christ; there may be where sound belief wanteth. Infidels being clean without the Church, deny directly and utterly reject the very principles of Christianity which heretics embrace, and err only by misconstruction, whereupon their opinions, although repugnant indeed to the principles of Christian faith, are notwithstanding by them held otherwise and maintained as most consistent therewith." The Privy Council by its Judgment of "Essays and Reviews" has decided that a Churchman may hold heretical opinions.

In popular language, the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians are orthodox; the Quakers, the Methodists, Wesleyans and otherwise, are orthodox; for our purpose popular language is sufficient.

Heresy, says Tertullian, is the result of wisdom, real or assumed. He writes: "The philosophers are the fathers of the heretics." It is computed that there have been no less than five hundred distinct heresies. Happily for us, most of them are dead and buried in Greek and Latin folios, rarely read and still more rarely understood. The East was the land of

heresy. Every day saw the birth of a new one amongst a people of subtle intellect and endowed with a language wonderfully contrived to express the most delicate and phantasmal forms of belief. We laugh at the schoolmen, at their barbarous Latin and incomprehensible disputations. No one now ventures to discuss how many angels could stand upon the point of a needle, but in the early ages of the Church the Fathers wasted their lives in disputations equally windy and barren of practical result. "Greek Christianity," writes Dean Milman, "was insatiably inquisitive, speculative. Confident in the inexhaustible copiousness and fine precision of its language, it endured no limit to its curious investigations. As each great question was settled or worn out, it was still ready to propose new ones. It began with the Divinity of Christ, still earlier perhaps with some of the gnostic cosmogonical or theophanic theories, so onward to the Trinity; it expired, or at least drew near its end, as the religion of the Roman East, discussing the Divine light on Mount Tabor." Extinct long ago are the questions to settle which Church councils were held, fanatic monks swarmed into Constantinople by hundreds from far away—Syrian, or Arabian, or African deserts—and armies

took the field. Even a vowel might stir up strife and bloodshed. The enmity of the Homoousian to the Homiousian was as bitter as that between Guelph and Ghibelline, as that of Capulet and Montague; and only the pen of a Swift could do justice to the brawls

"Bred of an airy word."

Heresy can be put down in two ways. You may argue it out of existence, or you may crush it out with the sword. As soon as ever the alliance between Church and State was formed, the latter was the favourite mode of dealing with heretics; it saved so much trouble. If you cut off a heretic's head, you are certain to stop his heretical tongue. There is an end of his pestiferous logic. Continue the process, and heresy is exterminated, as Unitarianism was in Poland—as the Huguenots were by the massacres of St. Bartholomew—as Protestantism was crushed out in the Low Countries by Alva, and in Spain by Torquemada and the *auto da fes* of Madrid. After a similar fashion, Bombastes Furioso proposed to annihilate his enemies single-handed. His plan was to take them half-a-dozen at a time, and when he had cut off the heads of the first division, a second was to follow to receive a similar favour at his hands, and so

on till all were slain. Power has always dealt with heretics after this fashion; in this way Churchmen endeavoured to put down Puritanism in England, Presbyterianism in Scotland, Popery in Ireland. To Henry IV. is due in this country the first permission to send heretics to the stake. The Preamble of the Act of 1401, *De Heretico Comburendo*, is as follows: "Divers false and perverse people, of a certain new sect, damnably thinking of the faith of the sacraments of the Church, and of the authority of the same, against the law of God and of the Church,—usurping the office of preaching,—do perversely and maliciously, in divers places within the realm, preach and teach divers new doctrines and wicked erroneous opinions contrary to the faith and determination of Holy Church. And of such sect and wicked doctrines they make unlawful conventicles, they hold and exercise schools, they make and write books, they do wickedly instruct and inform people, and excite and stir them to sedition and insurrection, and make great strife and division among the people, and other enormities horrible to be heard daily do perpetrate and commit. The diocesans cannot by their jurisdiction spiritual, without aid of the king's majesty, sufficiently correct these said false and perverse

people, nor refrain their malice, because they do go from diocess to diocess, and will not appear before the said diocesans; but the jurisdiction spiritual, the keys of the Church, and the censures of the same they do utterly condemn and despise, and so these wicked preachings and doctrines they do from day to day contrive and exercise to the destruction of all order and rule, right and reason."

The Bishops by this Act received arbitrary power to arrest and imprison on suspicion, without check or restraint of law, at their will and pleasure. Prisoners who refused to abjure their errors, who persisted in heresy or relapsed into it after abjuration, were sentenced to be burnt at the stake.

So much deadlier a thing was heresy deemed than evil-living on the part of the clergy, that, previous to the reign of Henry VII., Bishops, who had no power to imprison priests even though convicted of adultery or incest, had, as Mr. Froude points out, power to arrest every man on suspicion of heresy, and to detain him in prison untried. Constantine was the first Christian Emperor who had recourse to this system; and it was against the Arians, who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, that his enmity was directed. Death was the penalty for any one guilty of conceal-

ing an Arian book. Of course the Arians, in their turn, were equally ready to draw the sword. In those passionate and contentious times it was hard consistently and constantly to be orthodox. Justinian, whose laws against heretics were more severe than those of Constantine, and who was hailed by the Church as "the most Christian Emperor," actually died a heretic. A controversy arose as to whether the body of Christ was or was not liable to corruption. A new sect of course was formed, known as the Corruptibles and the Incorruptibles. The latter were considered heretics. Justinian gave them his support, and was on the point of persecuting others of a different way of thinking when he died. One of his successors, Theodosius, was just as ready to persecute the holders of equally unimportant opinions. He it was who put down the Tascodragitæ, "who made their prayers inwardly and silently, compressing their noses and lips with their hands, lest any sound should transpire."

Fortunately for our readers, religious London is not thus minutely divided and subdivided. We have still absurd squabbles, that for instance whether Mr. Mackonochie was kneeling or only bending, being pre-eminently so; yet on the whole in Western

Europe and among the German races the tendency is more and more to practical, and less and less to speculative life. In another way also may the comparatively speaking undisturbed orthodoxy of Western Europe be accounted for. For the orthodox there have been cakes and ale, and even the ass knoweth his owner and the ox his master's crib. Nothing so keeps men from religious speculation as a good endowment. In his "History of Latin Christianity," Dean Milman very significantly writes: "The original independence of the Christian character which induced the first converts in the strength of their faith to secede from the manners and usages, as well as the rites of the world, to form self-governed republics, as it were, within the social system; this noble liberty had died away as Christianity became an hereditary, an established, a universal religion." The poet asked, and he might well do so—

> "What makes all doctrines plain and clear?
> About two hundred pounds a year."

To have an opinion of his own, and to express it, was utterly impossible to any man whose heart was set upon church preferment. One illustration will suffice: Many —many years ago there was in the old city of Norwich a Bishop known by the name of Bathurst. His

connexions were good, and when George III. was king there was an Earl Bathurst and a Lord Chancellor Bathurst, and a Sir Benjamin Bathurst. This clerical scion had thus on his entry into public life every chance in his favour. He lived to a great age: he was born in 1744, and died in 1837; but to the last he was only Bishop of Norwich. Why was this? Well, on the 27th of May, 1808, Lord Granville moved for the House of Lords to resolve itself into a committee "to consider the petition of the Irish Catholics." The petition was not a prayer for political equality, simply for employment in military and civil situations. The Bishop of Norwich had the audacity to lift up his single voice from the episcopal bench on behalf of Lord Granville's very moderate motion. The heavens did not fall—nor did the earth open its mouth and swallow him up—but the light of the royal countenance was lost to him for ever. His daughter writes: "A friend of my father's happened to mention in the presence of Queen Charlotte that the Bishop of Norwich ought to be removed to the see of St. Asaph, as the emoluments were better and the duties less numerous. 'No,' said her Majesty, quickly; 'he voted against the king.'" Some years afterwards it was said by those about the Court that

the Bishop "might have commanded anything in the Church if he had taken the right line."

It has thus come to pass that heresy in London and the country has been confined within narrow bounds. Whatever Churchmen may have thought, the creed and the public utterances of the Church have been orthodox. Popular dissent has followed suit—heresy has been avoided by some as a temptation of the devil, by others as an obstacle to worldly success, but no religious life can exist without it. In the religious world, as a rule, heresy is life, orthodoxy death. "Are you a Christian?" asked one well-known man of another. "When I am a good man," was the reply; but, say the orthodox, it is on his belief or rejection of dogmas that a man's Christianity depends. One cheering sign of the times is that the religious public is beginning to realize the fact, that it does not follow that because a man holds heretical opinions he will pick your pocket, elope with your wife, or make away with your silver spoons. It is well when people come to think that there may be something purer, higher, holier, than unreasoning uniformity of opinion or than a blind assent to scholastic terms and definitions. Mental stagnation is not Christian life, neither does sterile orthodoxy

deserve the name. It was the recognition of this idea that gives to the Apostle John a special claim to admiration and regard. "If," says he, "a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" It was under the influence of the same spirit that the Master rebuked the zeal of his disciples when they would have hindered one who was according to their own account doing good, merely because "he followed not us." The passage is worth transcribing. "And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name and he followeth not us, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not, for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me; for he that is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water in my name because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward."

CHAPTER II.

THE JEWS.

OF the many definitions of London, perhaps the truest is that which describes it as several cities rolled into one. The rich inhabit Belgravia, the poor Bethnal Green. In Mark Lane on a Monday morning you might fancy, if you were to shut your eyes and listen to the conversation around, that you were in primitive East Anglia; on the contrary, in Chancery Lane, and all the places of resort contiguous, the talk is of writs, of issuing executions, of levying a distress, and of all those horrible processes by which law seeks to secure property from its natural enemies, poverty or rascality. Irish abound in Drury Lane, and in unsavoury Houndsditch the seed of Abraham congregate.

The traveller from the palatial West will perhaps shrink from leaving on his right hand Aldgate Pump, and plunging in the dark alleys and crowded lanes in which the Jews reside. Nor, if he be of a fastidious

stomach, would I much blame him. In Meeting House Yard, for instance, I saw a pool of dark fluid, around which little pale children were playing, suggesting something very rotten in the state of Denmark. It is in this neighbourhood that the far-famed Rag Fair is held on the Sunday, and all the week there is more or less dealing in such articles as come under the denomination of "old clo'," respecting which it may as a general rule be safely affirmed that, whilst we may dispute the title of clo', as regards much there vended, there can be no dispute as to the appropriateness of the descriptive adjective. In the lanes and courts around us are names familiar to us from infancy. Lazarus keeps a second-hand book-shop, and Moses sells fried fish. You see a printing-office, with posters up; on those posters are Hebrew characters. In Duke Street there are a couple of book-shops, but the books are all or chiefly Hebrew. In this neighbourhood you can easily forget that you are in London at all. It is not the English tongue you hear; or, if it be, it comes to you disguised in such a foreign accent as to be scarcely intelligible. Through the mist and fog dark eyes, all redolent of the far-off East, flash on you; and now and then a tall figure in

flowing robes, sad and solitary, stalks by; and you rub your eyes to be sure that you are not in a dream. This temporary delusion will be stronger if you visit this neighbourhood on a Friday evening just after sunset. In Whitechapel and Aldgate the gas is flaring, and a busy trade is carried on; in Leadenhall Street, in the offices of the great Navigation Companies or of the leading shipbrokers, clerks are busy writing, and weather-beaten skippers from Australia or the Cape or New Zealand are tearing about, if we may use a colloquial expression much in vogue, like mad. It is a contrast to pass from this busy scene into the Jewish quarter, where the shops are all shut up and where all is still. How is this? The answer is, it is the eve of the Sabbath, and the Jews are at their synagogues. There are three in this neighbourhood. The first and oldest is that of the Portuguese Jews in King Street, Duke's Place, erected in 1656. The first German synagogue, also in Duke's Place, was built in the year 1691, and occupied until 1790, when the present edifice was erected. This is called the Great Synagogue. The New Synagogue, as it is denominated, in Great St. Helens, is a very elegant and ornamental structure. The interior is very beautiful. In so dark and dolorous a neighbourhood

you are not prepared for anything so fine. Very liberally must these ancient people have subscribed for the fitting worship of their God. From the ground spring up pillars highly decorated, and in the side are windows of a rich arabesque pattern in stained glass. The ceiling is semi-dome with octagonal coffers containing gilded flowers upon an azure ground; and the pavement, which is of polished marble, forms a perfect circle. The ministers of the Great Synagogue were considered the leading ones. It is not so now. Dr. Adler is the head rabbi. He has been long in office, and is universally esteemed by Christians as well as Jews. He is an old man, and as his English is that of a foreigner it is clear that in his public addresses you get an inadequate idea of his talents or attainments. This remark applied to most of the Jewish ministers in London. They were foreigners, and in speaking English did not succeed much better than we do when we attempt to speak German or French. Now two-thirds of the Jewish ministers are English.

Very far back in English history we find the people whose descendants have taken possession of Houndsditch and all around, and turned it into a Jewish colony. More or less they have always been with

us. In Anglo-Saxon times we seem to have had a fair sprinkling of them. After the Conquest they arrived here in great numbers. By William Rufus they were especially favoured, and Henry I. conferred on them a charter of privileges. They were enabled to claim in courts of law the repayment of any money lent by them as easily as Christians, and while the latter were forbidden to charge any interest on their loans, there was no restriction in this respect put upon the Jews. At this time, doubtless, they laid the foundation of their subsequent wealth. The sovereign rather encouraged them, as the richer they were the more gold could be forced from them—and with our earlier as well as with many of our later kings, gold was a commodity always in request. During the former part of the reign of King John (A.D. 1199-1216) they seemed to have gained the favour of that monarch, or at any rate obtained permission to exist, and trade and worship in this country on sufferance. Subsequently, however, they appear to have suffered much persecution, and were eventually banished from the country in 1291 (19 Edward I.), continuing in exile for 367 years. Menasseh Ben Israel, a Jewish rabbi of great learning in Amsterdam, petitioned the Protector Cromwell, in the year 1649, on behalf

of his brethren, for a liberty which the Latin Secretary of the Lord Protector it is to be hoped would be foremost to advocate. During the interval the Jews lived secretly in England, but did not possess any "Jewries," or publicly organized congregations. Ultimately they obtained permission to return, though the Commonwealth refused to give any formal sanction to their re-appearance, merely tacitly consenting to it. The people of England, says Rebecca in "Ivanhoe," "are a fierce people, quarrelling ever with their neighbours or among themselves, and ready to plunge the sword into the bowels of each other. Such is no safe abode for the children of my people. Ephraim is an heartless dove. Issachar an overburdened drudge, which stoops between two burdens. Not in a land of war and blood, surrounded by hostile neighbours and distracted by internal factions, can Israel hope to rest during his wanderings." There is, however, reason to suppose that nowhere, except for a short interval in Spain and always in Holland, have the Jews fared better than in this country. In our time they have been allowed to take their seats as M.P's. We have seen a Prime Minister of England of Jewish origin. Need we say more? Jews are in all respects on an equality with

Christians; in art, and literature, and science, and the acquirement of wealth, they have displayed a genius equal to our own. In practical piety—in the benevolence which teaches the rich to give of their goods to the poor, they are infinitely our superiors.

Truly, if we may judge by the aspect of the Hebrew race in Houndsditch and its neighbourhood, there is much room for charity. Just as the Irish Corporations were accustomed a few years ago to land a cargo of "the finest pisantry under the sun" on the Welsh coast to beg or steal, work or die, according to circumstances, so the chiefs of the Jews on the Continent ship the poor and helpless of their people here, and a heavy tax is thus enforced on the wealthier portions of the community. Then, again, the Jews have a great dislike to military service; and the conscription which is imposed in Prussia, Austria, Poland, and France, drives large numbers away from the land of their birth. Thus their number in London is greater than people imagine. Dr. Stallard places it as 55,000, but many Jews inform me that 100,000 is nearer the mark. One thing is certain: as soon as a synagogue is opened anywhere it is immediately crowded; and on special occasions, such as the days of penitence, fifteen

regular and eighteen or twenty temporary synagogues are opened in different parts of London. Most of the foreign Jews when they arrive here are wretchedly poor and ignorant, but under any circumstances the Jew has to fight the battle of life under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, in consequence of the Mosaic law, which he is bound to obey, and which he does at a very heavy pecuniary sacrifice. It is almost impossible for a Jew to work with a Christian. He may not partake of his food. He may not work on Friday evening or on any part of Saturday, nor on the days set apart for the observance of the Jewish fasts and festivals. He is thus shut out from all employment in our factories, shipyards, engine works, or shops. If he seeks work at the docks he is driven away by the roughs. The "old clo'" business is being gradually taken away from him by the Irish, so his chief industrial occupations are tailoring, cigar-making, fish and fruit selling. The women are employed in tailoring and shirt-making, in the manufacture of umbrellas and parasols, caps and slippers; latterly the supply of cheap picture frames has got into the hands of the Jews. I fancy none of these trades are very lucrative, yet the Jew is rarely a thief, never a drunkard, always attached

to his family, and remarkable for his longevity. Suicide is rare, and murder never met with among the Jews. There are not twenty-five male Jewish convicts in all England, and for many years there has not been a Jewess in any convict establishment. Such is the charity of the wealthy that the poorest, who have resided here six months, are looked after. No Jew ever is permitted to die in a workhouse. In many of our hospitals there are wards for the Jews, supported by them. The Jewish Board of Guardians inquire into every case of distress, and relieve it. Yet so economically do they go to work that their expenditure in 1869 was, including loans, not quite 5000*l.*, yet in that year the applications were 12,510.

But, in addition to their charities, the Jews are alive to the importance of promoting religion and education. The Jewish Association for the Diffusion of Religious Knowledge has now been in existence eleven years. Amongst its supporters are the Rothschilds, the Goldsmids, and the other wealthy Israelites whose charities are known all over England; but it needs, and let us add deserves, more efficient support. It has established a Sabbath school, where the present number of pupils is over 500, where instruction is

given in reading, translation, and explanation of the Bible, translation of the prayers, religious and moral lessons, and Hebrew hymn-singing. It has established a synagogue in Union Hall, Artillery Lane, where lectures on the Sabbath are given. It has provided Scripture classes, and has published a series of Bible stories and Sabbath readings, of which half a million of copies have been delivered. The committee, when issuing the first number of their publications, stated that those papers would "have for their object to impress upon the Jewish mind proper notions of the principles and observances, spirit and mission, of Judaism, and by appeals to the reason rather than to sentiment, to develope and foster the most fervent conviction of the truths of our sacred religion." In the way of Bible distribution the Society has especially been active; until recently it was comparatively a rare occurrence to find a Bible in the houses of the Jewish poor. Where it was found it was of course the authorized Anglican version, which, says the report, "however great its literary merit, must be admitted to be faulty, and to contain numerous mistranslations adverse to the spirit of our religion." The version they circulated was Dr. Leeser's, and they anticipate the day when no poor Jewish home wherein parent or child can read

shall be without a Jewish version of the Holy Scriptures. Under the auspices of the committee, a reply to Bishop Colenso was published.

The children are educated in a way of which Christians have no idea. The Jewish free school in Brick Lane, with its three thousand children, is a sight to see. There is, besides, an infant school equally flourishing, and no poor Jew is relieved unless he sends his children to school. In the visiting of the sick, in the care of the poor, all take their share. I believe a synagogue is a little commonwealth in which the rich help the poor, most frequently by way of small loans, and in which the strong take care of the weak. In these works of beneficence all take their share, the humblest as well as those of more exalted rank. The Jewish M.P. takes his place at the Board of Guardians. The Jewish Countess will not only give of her wealth, but will leave her stately home and seek out the abode of sorrow and distress. Charity is inculcated in the Talmud as the first of duties; and, if heaven is won by good works, the Jews are safe and sure.

As a theology, to an outsider, Judaism seems ritualism *in excelsis*.

The Jewish faith is contained in the Creed and

the Shemang. Of the two, the latter is the more important. It is a declaration of the unity of God, the first utterance of the child, the last of the devout Jew as the watchers stand by his bedside, at the head of which is the Shechinah, or Divine presence, and at the foot of which, with outstretched wing, waiting for the last breath, hovers the angel of death. The Creed, which every Jew ought to believe and rehearse daily, but which they treat as Churchmen do their Thirty-nine Articles, is as follows:—

1. I believe, with a perfect faith, that God (blessed be His name!) is the Creator and Governor of all created beings, and that He alone has made, does make, and ever will make, every production.

2. I believe, with a perfect faith, that God (blessed be His name!) is one God, and that there is no unity whatever like unto Him, and that He alone is our God, who was, is, and will be eternally.

3. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) is not corporeal, nor is He subject to any of those changes that are incidental to matter, and that He has no similitude whatever.

4. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) is both the first and last of all things.

5. I believe, with a perfect faith, that to the Creator (blessed be His name!) yea, to Him only, it is proper to address our prayers, and that it is not proper to pray to any other being.

6. I believe, with a perfect faith, that all the words of the prophets are true.

7. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the prophecy of Moses our instructor (may his soul rest in peace!) was true, and that he excelled all the sages that preceded him or they who may succeed him.

8. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the law which we have now in our possession is the same law which was given to Moses by our instructor.

9. I believe, with a perfect faith, that this law will never be changed, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) will never give us any other law.

10. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) knoweth all the actions and thoughts of mankind, as it is said, "He fashioneth their hearts, and knoweth all their works."

11. I believe, with a perfect faith, that the Creator (blessed be His name!) rewards those who observe His commandments, and punishes those who transgress them. (12.) The Jew believes in the coming

of the Messiah; and (13), in the resurrection of the dead.

The Jews in London are divided into three communities—the Reformed, the *Ashkenasim*, or Polish and German Jews, and the *Sephardim*, or Portuguese and Spanish. These latter pride themselves on their ancient descent, and especially on their nationality. Their Church, as we have said, is the oldest in London; their rabbi is Dr. Artom, and their service differs from that of the *Ashkenasim* in matters of detail not of faith. Of course both take their stand upon the Pentateuch, which they term the Torah or law, a portion of which is read every Sabbath; but, according to the rabbinists, Moses received two laws on Mount Sinai, one written, the other unwritten. This latter was transmitted down from generation to generation by word of mouth until after the destruction of Jerusalem, when it was committed to writing. This work is called *Mishna*, or repetition. In process of time it became a text-book in the schools of Palestine and Babylon, and lectures were delivered on it and comments made by rabbis more or less learned and devout. In course of time these comments and lectures were collected together into one work under the title of *Gemara*, completion. The *Talmud*, which

means doctrine, contains the two. There are two Talmuds in existence. One contains the decisions of the Palestine rabbis, collected and published somewhere in the fourth century; the other contains similar decisions on the part of the learned divines of Babylon. The difference between the two is exclusively in the *Gemara*. The Babylonian Talmud is the one in common use. It is for this Talmud, long too much neglected by Christians, that the Jews have contended for ages, and it is for this Talmud an able writer, in an article in the "Quarterly," which produced an immense sensation at the time, eloquently pleaded, much to the astonishment, most undoubtedly, of those bigoted ecclesiastics who, deeming the traditions of the Romanist Fathers equal in authority with the Bible, look down upon the older and truer traditions of the Talmud with the contempt which ignorance always cherishes for what it cannot or does not understand. Sentiments, as the learned Professor Hurwitz wrote, worthy of Plato have been described as rabbinical reveries, and their authors arraigned of impiety on no better grounds than what the detractors supplied by wantonly imposing their own literal sense on expressions evidently and unmistakeably figurative.

In the synagogue is the worship daily or weekly of the devout Jew performed, for the aim of that worship is to connect itself with the daily life. Dr. Arnold's idea of the Church and State being synonymous—an idea as old as the judicious Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity—is undoubtedly in its origin Jewish. The officers of the synagogue are a complete political as well as religious administration. A synagogue forms a little world of its own. A volume would be requisite to tell of the officers of the synagogue and of their various duties. There is among them no separation into lay and secular. The community consists of three kinds of members—the Cohen or priest, the Levite, and the Israelite. A minister must often support himself, but his ministry never ceases. To the last hour of his life he maintains his ministerial character. "The rabbis are men of great learning; and now in the Jews' College the students," writes a report just received, "have the advantage of a careful and systematic clerical education, and an equally valuable advantage, an example of piety and earnestness in their teachers."

The oldest synagogue in London is, as we have said, that of the Sephardim, in Bevis Marks. Let us go there first. All Jewish synagogues are alike; all

the men keep their hats on, and wear a scarf round their shoulders, hanging down to their knees. At one time, in another respect, they were much alike—that was in the use of a service not understood by the people generally. All this is altered now. Within the last thirty years there has been a great change for the better. There are but few even of the poorest Jews who do not understand Hebrew.

The governing officers of the synagogue are the Wardens, the Treasurer, the Overseer, and the Elders. The clerical officers are the Chazan, or reader, and the Shama, or second reader, and clerk. The ark is always situated in the south-east end of the synagogue, to direct the worshipper towards Jerusalem. The ark contains the law, written on vellum, fastened to rollers, on the tops of which are little crowns of silver surrounded by bells. The rolling and unrolling of the Law is a ceremony carefully observed every Sabbath. In form the Bevis Marks synagogue much resembles one of our old Nonconformist places of worship before they were improved according to the requirements of modern taste. You pass into it from behind some raised benches, on which several stout old gentlemen are gesticulating with all their might. A little further on is the reading desk, where the reader, with his hat on, his scarf round

his shoulders, is performing his appointed task—at one time singly, at another time with the energetic assistance of the whole house. The readers wear black gowns. The faces of the reader and the rabbi are alike turned to the ark, before which a lamp perpetually burns. Of course there never are pews, but benches, under which are lockers, in each of which the worshipper deposits his scarf and prayer-book. In the synagogues of the *Ashkenasim* the benches nearest the ark, where the chief rabbi stands, are considered the most honourable; but the Spanish and Portuguese Jews make no difference in this respect. In the evening the synagogue is lighted up by means of large tapers and old-fashioned gas-chandeliers. In the service all join with more or less fervour. It consists entirely of reading and singing prayers and certain portions of Scripture. No sermon or lecture, except on Sabbaths and festivals, is necessary or usual. The melodies used are ancient, and the reading is of a very peculiar character, and not to be confounded with chanting or intoning as known to Christians. Most of the congregation in Bevis Marks seem to keep time with their bodies, as the sound rises and dies away. Also every other sentence begins with a woah-wooah sound of

a monotonous cast; but all seem to enjoy it, especially the little Hebrew lads, who make more noise than anybody else. Sometimes the people stand up, at other times they sit down—they never kneel; but the stranger realizes little solemnity while the service is performing, and many of the Jews are quite ready to enter into a little secular conversation, or, if need be—as we can testify from personal observation—to quarrel. The prayers are chiefly of a laudatory, a confiding, a grateful, reverent character, and in a style, as regards composition, indicative of a foreign origin. Indeed, all the time the service is performing —the principal one is on the Saturday morning, and very long—you feel as if you were a stranger, as if you had no business there; that to the hook-nosed, black-haired, dark-eyed men around, you are a poor pale-faced, flat-nosed Saxon, to be preyed on and victimized to any extent. Here and there you see a foreigner in the picturesque garb of the East, looking sad and solitary as if he really remembered Zion, as if he had walked along the shores of Galilee, rested beneath the shade of the cedars of Lebanon, or had drank of

"Siloa's brook,
That flowed fast by the oracle of God."

Occasionally a Jew will rush in, seize a prayer-book, and, shutting his eyes, gabble on at a prodigious rate as if he had started late and had to make up for lost time, and his repeated bowing to all points of the compass is, to the spectator, of a very perplexing character. In this quarter the Jews, as regards appearance, are not very wealthy, nor have many of them very clean hands, nor, except on certain occasions, are the synagogues very well filled. Here you fail to recognise the swell Jews of Margate and Ramsgate, of Brighton and the Boulevards, the fact being that the rich Jews, like the rich Christians, have gone further west; yet the Montefiores belong to Bevis Marks, and the Rothschilds to the great congregation in Duke's Place. Such are the London synagogues, including, in addition to those we have already referred to, those in Fenchurch Street, St. Alban's Place, Maiden Lane, Cutler Street, Islington, Portland Street, Bayswater, and others. But the reader will ask, What of the ladies?—most of our churches and chapels would look intolerably destitute without them. The answer is, all the duties of their worship depend entirely on the males. The Jewesses are allowed to sit in a gallery. At Bevis Marks you see they are there,

that is all. Whether they are white or black, whether they listen or not, it is impossible to tell, as they are concealed behind a lattice-work almost as impervious to male eyes as those behind which, on the night of a debate, our House of Commons hides our British fair. In other synagogues their gallery is open, and they can see and be seen.

Even these ancient people are moving with the times. The *Jewish Record* says, "That the Synod of Jewish Rabbis, which has just been held, has recognised three new principles. 1. Individual authority in religious matters. 2. The primary importance of free scientific investigation. 3. The rejection of the belief in Jewish restoration. The Synod also recommends choral services and the use of the organ in the synagogue, and musical performances on Sabbaths and festivals." This paragraph is not exactly correct. The Synod was one of little importance, and the principles enunciated were not affirmed, only discussed; but I quote it as an indication of the spirit existing in our day in all the religious circles of our land.

CHAPTER III.

THE REFORMED JEWS.

SAPPHO, implies Mr. Pope, at her "toilette's greasy task," is quite a different individual to "Sappho fragrant at an evening mask." Just as much does the Jew of the West-end, the Jew of society, rich and cultivated, the Jew who gives good dinners, drives in a faultless brougham, on whose fingers diamonds sparkle, differ from the Hounds-ditch Jew, toiling along painfully under a load of ol' clo' considerably the worse for wear, or smoking bad cigars in the Effingham Saloon. In the same way do the synagogues of the West differ from those of the East. In place of that in Portland Street, the Jews have erected a gorgeous one, towards which the Rothschild family have subscribed 4000*l.* Those in the Haymarket and at Bayswater and Islington are clean and comfortable, and that in Margaret Street is especially so.

On Saturdays service commences there at ten and

terminates at one. Let us go there. As you enter, of course you face the ark. On each side benches, well cushioned, are placed. On the right of the ark is a pulpit. In the middle is the raised platform for the readers and the rabbi, the Rev. Mr. Marks. There is a gallery facing the pulpit, in which is an organ, an innovation of which the orthodox do not approve, as it implies Sabbath labour, and there is another innovation I dare say equally shocking. Actually in the side galleries appropriated to ladies you can see them. People of an uncharitable turn often insinuate that so many young men attend at such or such a church that they may see the ladies. I don't think the fact that you can see them in Margaret Street Synagogue adds materially to the male congregation. Yet Hebrew maidens, some of them, have been and are beautiful as any whose names have come echoing down to us along "the corridors of time." However, if the Christian stranger should let his eyes wander thitherward he is to be forgiven. Hebrew is a difficult tongue to follow if you are ignorant of it, and, save where there is no singing, which is very fine, the reading of the prayers is not very impressive. Nor do the gentlemen around, all wearing black hats and silk scarfs over the coat,

appear to be much impressed. They sit with their prayer-books in their hands, in appearance as calm and unmoved as real West-end Christians of unquestioned respectability. At a certain interval the ark is unlocked, the roll of the law is taken reverently to the platform, where it is uplifted on all sides that all may see it, and then, when the reader has finished, it is borne back and deposited in the ark as formally and reverently as it was taken out. After a little while, as you begin to weary, one of the individuals on the platform leaves it. He wears a black gown and bands, he ascends the pulpit and preaches with his hat on; that is the Rev. Mr. Marks. He is thought much of by the younger and more educated Jews. As a preacher, much is to be said in his favour: he is short, he delivers himself well, his style of address is popular, and he gives many an Old Testament lesson. He demands of Abraham's descendants Abraham's faith in God, and obedience to Him. The Christian, of course, misses much. We worship a Messiah who has come; the Jews still, with sad and weary eyes, look onward, waiting His advent. Wherever civilization and science go hand in hand, wherever humanity reaps "the long results of time," whether in the old world or the new,

wherever the great Caucasian race multiplies and flourishes, there, more or less, is there a living faith in the mission of Christ as a Divine teacher, as the comforter of human sorrow, as the healer of human woe, as the model for all to follow who aspire upwards to heaven and to God. In Europe there are 280 millions of Christians, and but very few of Jews. Everywhere they are an immense minority.

> "The cedars wave on Lebanon,
> But Judah's statelier maids are gone."

The Jews are not a proselyting people, but they are becoming increasingly anxious that the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob should not forsake the God of their fathers; and about thirty years ago certain of the London Jews agitated for a reformed mode of worship, as they deemed, more in accordance with the circumstances of their brethren in this age and clime. They argued that there is much that is local in the Jewish ritual, and much that is inapplicable now; that the people in consequence would fall away unless a reformed mode of worship was introduced. I do not think the Reformers have made as much progress as they anticipated, though to a stranger they certainly appear to have not merely modified, but improved the service. The Prayer-book was

carefully revised, an improved ritual was drawn up by blending the beautiful portions of the Portuguese and German Liturgies, a choir was formed for the purpose of inspiring devotional feeling by means of solemn song. In the old orthodox synagogues the custom of calling up persons to read the law for the sake of presenting their offerings during divine service, often interferes with the edification of the assembly, according to the Jewish reformers, and this also they omit. Furthermore, they decline to recognise as sacred, days which are evidently not ordained as such in Scripture. It must be remembered the Jew of the Restoration is much more of a formalist than the Jew of David's and Solomon's time, that the rabbis returned after the captivity laden with Babylonian learning, and that a new school arose. In his sermon on the opening of his new place of worship in 1842, Mr. Marks said, on behalf of himself and people, "We must as our conviction urges us solemnly deny that a belief in the *divinity* of the traditions contained in the Mishna and the Jerusalem Talmuds is of equal obligation to the Israelite with the faith in the divinity of the law of Moses. We know that these books are human compositions, and though we are content to accept with

reverence from our past Biblical ancestors advice and instruction, we cannot unconditionally accept their laws." "On all hands," continued Mr. Marks, "it is conceded that an absolute necessity exists for the modification of our worship, but no sooner is any important improvement proposed than we are assured of the sad fact that there is not at present any authority competent to judge in such matters for the whole house of Israel. Now, admitting this as a truth (since the extinction of the right of ordination has rendered impossible the convocation of a Sanhedrim, whose authority shall extend over all Jewish congregations), does it not follow as a necessity that every Hebrew congregation must be authorized to take such measures as shall bring the divine service into consonance with the will of the Almighty, as explained to us in the law and the prophets?" To the force of this reasoning the Jews as a body remain impervious, and though time has mitigated the angry feeling which the Reformers created, as Reformers always do, and no longer do the chief men of the orthodox Jews issue warnings against the Reformers, who from the first professed their love to the old synagogues and their desire to continue connected with them in works of charity, yet the new commu-

nity is by no means cordially received and sanctioned by the old. Nor can we expect it to be otherwise. The more men have in common, the smaller is the difference between them, the more, often, is the ill-will with which they regard each other. The eye of the true theologian is of a wonderfully magnifying character. As he looks, a little rivulet expands into an impassable gulf, and a molehill becomes a mountain. What bitter things have been said, what fierce passions have been aroused, what martyrs have had to die and survivors to weep, because of what seemed to cool observers trifles light as air!

Yet, after all, there is a danger. If rationalist principles prevail, and the Old Testament be a series of myths or allegories, why still retain the ritualist law in all its strictness? and if that goes the whole system goes. Pious Jews find all society against them; its spirit, its customs, its literature, all hostile, if not to their nation, at any rate to their faith. In too many cases they perceive that those who forsake the religion of their forefathers are but little the better for doing so. They find that those who begin by laughing at rabbinical absurdities end by despising the Word of God. A Hebrew infidel, an infidel among the Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption

and the glory and the covenants, writes a Jewish author already quoted, "is indeed a frightful and portentous phenomenon," and thus the more sensitive and conservative amongst them shrink from in any way modifying their ritual in accordance with what is termed the spirit of the age. Christians have no idea of the earnestness of spirit, of the striving after conformity to the law of God, of the devout Jew, or of the great and grand truths which he extracts from observances or forms in which they can see no meaning. The Jew is fond of pleasure, fond of show, fond of jewellery and gorgeous dress, and on his Sabbath rarely exhibits a very devout appearance; nevertheless his religion requires daily observances from his birth upwards, which can only be carried out by means of a living faith. In the first place his religion is an expensive one, and he must pay in various ways very heavily for its support. It is true many of the observances required have become obsolete, but on the Sabbath he has much to go through at home, as well as to attend at the synagogue and to abstain from all worldly occupations. After the third day of the month every strict Jew either alone or with a number of his co-religionists must make the salutation of the moon. Then every month has certain days to be

kept, especially in October, their new year, on the first and second days. It is believed that the destiny of every individual is determined on this month by the Creator Himself; that those whose demerits preponderate are sealed to death, those whose merits preponderate to life, and those whose merits and demerits are equal are delayed until the day of atonement. The first ten days of their new year are ten days of repentance, during which the Israelites are to repent and confess their sins, pray to the Almighty to write them down in the book of life, and grant them a happy new year. On the seventh day every one has a branch of willow procured under the superintendence of the officers of the synagogue, and all repair there with branches in their hands. The last of these days is the Day of Atonement, and is religiously kept by every Jew. On the 15th is the Feast of Tabernacles, on which the Jews are expected to live in booths, but in this country the rule is not strictly observed. In April is the most important of all the festivals—that of the Passover and of unleavened bread, when the doors of the house are left open for all, even the very poorest of the poor. In June is held the feast of Pentecost, to commemorate the giving of the law. The synagogues on that occasion

are decorated with flowers, and in their houses the tables and floors are also dressed with flowers, sweet briar, and other fragrant herbs. A conscientious Jew must have a life of intense labour and self-denial, nor can he evade his duties nor impose them on another. How welcome to them of old must have been the Master's kindly words, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, and ye shall find peace unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." To appreciate these words aright you must fancy yourself a Jew, weighed down to the earth by the daily routine of painful ceremonial and the rigid requirements of inelastic law.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREEK CHURCH.

IN the dark ages of Christianity, when the zeal and purity of the early professors and martyrs of the new creed had died away; when Constantine, anxious to fix his throne on a permanent basis, entered into an alliance with priests and bishops, not satisfied with the humble position assigned them in the Church, only by courtesy at that time to be called Apostolical; there was a revival of an old abuse, or rather, of a Pagan principle—the alliance of Church and State. Dr. Arnold, the truest Churchman in modern times, believed that the national conversions to Christianity, which then became the fashion, were productive of immense evil. This is the opinion long held by Dissenters, and latterly by an increasing number of independent inquirers. If so, Constantine was an arch-heretic; for surely, when Christ had taught that His kingdom was not of this world, it was heresy to disbelieve it, and, in the very

teeth of such a declaration, to introduce an ecclesiastical system founded upon compulsion, ignoring altogether the Divine power of Christianity, and assuming that it could only be maintained by the sword and pay of the State.

Constantine's empire has vanished, but his Church remains; and it speaks to us, as Dean Stanley says, in the only living voice which has come down to us from the Apostolic Church: the State Churches of Europe, including even the pretentious one at Rome, are but its children. It is the pattern and model for them all. Greek was the original tongue of the early Christians. It was at Antioch, a Greek city, the birthplace of Ignatius, of Chrysostom, of John of Damascus, that they were first called by the name which now denotes the noblest form of human development. In the Old World or the New, the Councils to which Churchmen in all ages have referred, as of equal, or almost of equal, authority with the Bible, were Eastern. In them the Pope of Rome was considered but as a Bishop in the midst of his equals. The great fathers of the Church wrote in Greek. Dean Stanley says, the earliest fathers of the Western Church, Clemens, Irenæus, Hermas, Hippolytus, did the same. St. Mark

first preached his Gospel at Alexandria. St. John established a school at Ephesus, and Polycarp at Smyrna. The very word theology, as Dean Stanley remarks, arose from the peculiar questions agitated in the East. If there be such a thing as apostolical succession, the Greek Church has it. To this day, the English Church owes much to the East; the direction for holding of Easter is of Alexandrian origin, and on every Sunday, in the "Kyrie Eleison," the "Gloria in Excelsis," in part of the "Te Deum," and the prayer of St. Chrysostom, English Churchmen borrow from the service of the Church of Constantine. In Queen Elizabeth's time it was enacted that the Councils of Nicæa, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon were equally judges of heresy as the High Court of Parliament with the assent of the English clergy in their Convocation. No wonder, in these days, when Churchmen are prone to rely on Church claims rather than on Bible teaching—when, of little faith, and timid as to the future, they trust rather to hazy traditions than to living truths—no wonder the Greek Church has become to them an object of special reverence; that they long to form a union with it. Though proud of its superiority, it regards them as little better than Roman Catholics—Roman Catholics

as a Greek once said to the writer, without the Pope.

The oldest creed we have is Greek. The pious forgeries of our Church historians are enough to make a candid inquirer a thorough sceptic as to all they say; but we may still give some credit to Eusebius of Cæsarea, the father of ecclesiastical history. He tells us he read his creed before the Council of Nicæa. It was the same, he said, that he had learnt in his childhood from his predecessors, during the time that he was a catechumen, and at his baptism; and which he had taught for many years as a presbyter and bishop. It had been approved of by the Emperor Constantine, and would have been carried had not there appeared a probability of its being accepted by Arius and his partisans—a consummation which, in the opinion of the majority, would have had a disastrous effect, would have promoted union, would have saved many from the sin of schism, would have allowed the energies of the Church to have been directed to the conversion of the world rather than to internal squabbles, would have relieved Constantine from the stain and guilt and shame of having recourse to the sword to repress religious opinion. The Council of Nicæa cared for none of

these things; all they wanted was victory, and so the earliest Christian creed was rejected by the Church. It was as follows:—

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, both visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only begotten Son, the Firstborn of every creature, begotten of the Father before all worlds, by whom also all things were made; Who, for our salvation, was incarnate, and lived amongst men, and suffered and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the Father; and shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead; and I believe in one Holy Ghost. Believing each of them to be, and to have existed, the Father only, only the Father and the Son, only the Son and the Holy Ghost, only the Holy Ghost."

Instead of this, but on it, the Nicene Creed was framed, and this creed is still the bond of union in all the Churches of the East. We have corrupted it, and as Dean Stanley remarks, "every time we recite the creed in its present altered form, we have departed from the intention of the fathers of Nicæa, and incurred deprecation and excommunication at the hands of the fathers of Ephesus." In the heart of London the Greeks have a place of worship. You

feel interested as you enter. In the tongue in which you hear the Gospel there read, the Gospel was first proclaimed. Peter, Paul, John, spoke just such language as that you hear. Ever since the Master left the earth has Sunday after Sunday, and year after year, this Greek Church met in Syria in remembrance of Him. In many things the Church of Constantine was less assuming than that of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth. Where in our Prayer-book we have, "I absolve thee," the Greeks say, "The Lord absolve thee." Where the English Church says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," the Greek more humbly and Scripturally offers up a prayer for the Divine blessing. In other ways also they differ: they have no organs; the congregation stands all the time of service; their baptism consists of three immersions, and laying on of hands; they administer extreme unction, offer prayers for the dead, and allow infant communion; they have no organized hierarchy; their clergy are married, and their laity have a considerable amount of power. They pride themselves on their orthodoxy, and are very bitter against the doctrine of the double procession—that is, that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

And now let us go to London Wall, of which the Pope, or head, is the Rev. Narcissus Morphinos, a gentleman really courteous and sincere, and indefatigable in the performance of his sacred duties. Of all the chapels in London, surely this in London Wall is the most unique. As we enter we face a recess, before which lamps are burning; in that recess is a crucifix with a lamp burning over it. In this recess is a door which is partly open, and between the door and the crucifix officiates the priest at a small table. He wears a very rich cassock, and occasionally has on his head a primitive-looking sort of hat, without a brim, and very big. I fancy there are no poor Greeks in London. On our right is a recess, in which are ladies elegantly dressed. On our left is a pulpit very rarely used, and a table at which two clerks are seated. They seem to have the performance of the service very much to themselves. There is a choir in one of the side galleries. In his recess, before the altar, the priest is engaged in praying and taking the sacrament; but every now and then he comes out. A side door opens, and a lad in a white surplice, holding an enormous lighted taper, appears. Then the priest comes from the altar, and stands on the steps. It may be to swing the censer, or to bring out the

Gospels bound in silver, which almost all present come forward to kiss; or it may be, in the course of the service, some one wishes to communicate. Then, while the clerks are reading, the doors of the altar are opened, and the priest appears with a cup in his hand, which the communicant comes forward to receive. (The cup, it must be observed, contains bread and wine.) Again the priest comes forward with the crucifix, to which all bow; and last of all he comes forward and says a few simple words of edification to his faithful flock, in number, I should fancy, from two to three hundred. And this reminds us we have not yet stated where they are. Well, they are exactly opposite the altar, before which there is a vacant space well carpeted, and into which, on one or two occasions in the course of the service, the priest descends. The seats are beautifully carved, and are something like those in our cathedral stalls. Each worshipper is well fenced in by himself; and, as he stands all the time, he will find the sides very convenient for resting his arms on. Each seat is beautifully finished, as the reader can well imagine when he is told that the carving of each seat cost about eight pounds about fifteen years ago, when the chapel was first opened. There are no sittings appropriated

to particular individuals, any person coming takes the first he finds vacant. All expenses are paid by the men, chiefly merchants in Finsbury Square, who subscribe on an average for the cost of the service about twenty-five pounds a year. Two gentlemen contributed eighty, and one as much as two hundred pounds, a year. The annual income of the church is stated to be 1660*l.*, and of this 50*l.* or 60*l.* has to be paid to an English church over the way—a grievance which the Greeks, as well they may, feel deeply. There is another Greek church in London, that of the Russian Embassy,—that of course being much smaller. It cannot, I should fancy, surpass in neatness and finish this in London Wall. The Greek Church, Dean Stanley tells us, has always been unfriendly to the arts. You would not think so; the building seems just what it should be—handsome, ecclesiastical in appearance, and yet plain. On the screen, behind which is the altar, are paintings of the "Last Supper," "The Virgin and her Child," and a few others, intended to denote to the eye of the worshipper the great fact the worship has to commemorate. Pictures are used but as symbols, as even words themselves are, of ideas needed for human salvation.

The Greek Church protests against anything in the way of doctrine not found in the Bible. Surely it cannot claim the same sanction for its rites and ceremonies. As each worshipper entered he made the sign of the cross on his forehead and his shoulders and breast. This ceremony was repeated several times in the course of the service, the priest on more than one occasion doing the same; indeed, this seems to be the only way in which the laity join in the service. They utter no responses, they declare with one voice no creed, they raise no sacred chant or song; otherwise, they stand as it were motionless and apart; everything is done for them by the officiating priest. He comes between them and God. They speak through him and by him; without him they cannot worship the Father in heaven. Such is the theory of worship current in the Greek Church. Thus was it when the Imperial purple was worn by Constantine fifteen hundred years ago; thus it is in the reign of Queen Victoria, thus it will be, we may predict, for the Greek Church is jealous of every iota of its creed, *in secula seculorum.*

Well does a living writer remark, "Such as the Greek Church became on the extinction of Paganism, such, or nearly such, she seems to be now. Her mis-

sionary work has been narrow, her moral influence and control at home small, and though she has preserved a rigid continuity of doctrinal form, the principle of an ever-expanding and all-absorbing vitality has been wanting; in great cities her prelates have too frequently been the slaves of wealth and power, of courtly intrigue and political faction; in the desert her monks have become dreamy and unpractical anchorites. No lands reclaimed, no centres of agriculture and civilization created, no literature preserved, no schools founded, no human beings raised to a higher sphere of social action and duty, are to be set down to the account of the Greek Church. She is a fragment of old Byzantine civilization, as rigid and angular as the mosaics that still adorn and seem to frown down from the walls of her churches."

CHAPTER V.

THE ROMAN CATHOLICS.

IF we may quote the Eastern Church, the Roman Catholic Church is the greatest heresy of modern times. In the Encyclic Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs, the Papal system is referred to as "the chief heresy of the latter days, which flourishes now, as its predecessor, Arianism, flourished before it in the earlier ages, and which, like Arianism, shall in like manner be cast down and vanish away." "I die in the faith of the Catholic Church before the disunion of East and West," were the last words of Bishop Ken. Under the Stuarts, in solemn conclave the Anglicans accused the Romanists of idolatry. In the opinion, then, of the oldest Church, the only Church with an indisputable apostolical succession, and in the opinion of some of England's greatest Churchmen, the Church of Rome is an heretical one. Such is the conclusion to which also we are driven by the very slightest historical inquiry. Lady Her-

bert wonders that an Anglican Churchman can go to Jerusalem and not become a Romanist. Why, as the priest takes you from one sacred station to another, shows you where the Saviour fainted beneath the load of the cross, where Saint Veronica wiped His face with her handkerchief, where the print of the Saviour's foot yet remains,—when we all know that the Jerusalem of the Saviour's time is some eighty feet below the surface, and that all these assertions are absolutely false, you feel indignant, and, if you have the smallest iota of intellect left, after listening to the priestly legends, return a considerably sounder Protestant than you went. In like manner, history leads you to a similar conclusion as to the Roman Church. History, with an impartial pen, tells us how the Roman heresy sprang up, and grew, and reigned in every land. History robs Romanism of all its terror and of all its power. We see it, with plain, unblinded eyes, to be a heresy gradually enlarging its claims in accordance with the increasing ambition of its prelates, and the increasing credulity of its devotees. Gradually, as the memory of apostolic teaching and preaching passed away, the Church of Rome, after the fall of Jerusalem, continued to advance among the western Churches cer-

tain vague assertions of authority. In proportion as its clergy asserted their claims, other changes of an unscriptural character were made. First of all, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration was asserted; then a mysterious veneration began to attach itself to the celebration of the Lord's Supper; the sign of the cross was held to be vital to the expulsion of the devil; and prayers for the dead became common. A great step was gained when the doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy was enforced; when Gregory the Great, as the Romanists may well call him, inculcated purgatory, and pilgrimage to holy places; instituted the Canon of the Mass, and added splendour to the ceremonies of the Church, and claimed the power of the keys for the successors of St. Peter. On the foundation thus raised it was easy to base the most astounding claims; whether you are asked to believe that the Church of Loretto flew through the air from Syria to Italy, or, as in our time, the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius, and the immaculate conception of the Virgin. After a certain point gained, the rest is sure to follow. Give up the Bible, believe in the priest, and the Roman heresy is the natural result.

In the Catholic Directory I find the statistics of

Romanism as it exists in London. The province of Westminster, established by his Holiness Pope Pius IX. (Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church,—such are a few of the titles he assumes), Sept. 29, 1850, comprises the diocese of Westminster, with twelve suffragan dioceses. Westminster comprises Essex, Hertfordshire, and Middlesex, with, for Archbishop and Metropolitan, the Rev. Edward Henry Manning, elected and consecrated in 1865. In London also there is another Church dignitary, the Rev. Thomas Grant, Bishop of Southwark, elected and consecrated in 1851. The patron saints of the diocese of Westminster are "our blessed Lady, conceived without sin; St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles; St. Edward, King and Confessor." In addition to the Virgin in Southwark, the patron saints are St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Augustine. The ecclesiastical statistics of Westminster diocese are, priests—secular, regular, oratorians, oblates of St. Charles, and unattached, 221; public churches, chapels, and stations, 123; and the average attendance at the four schools of the diocese was, for 1866-67, 12,056. Of course this includes more than the London district; but then in Southwark diocese

I find St. George's Cathedral, and, besides, about thirty chapels or stations; and of the 160 priests in the diocese, we may reasonably conclude that a fourth are engaged in London and its suburbs. Last year thirty-eight secular clergy were ordained for England. Of these, thirteen were for the dioceses of Westminster and Southwark.

A correspondent of the *Weekly Register*, writing to show the increase of Catholicism in London during the last thirty years, points out that in 1839 there were in the metropolis and the suburbs the following Catholic churches:—St. Mary's, Moorfields; St. Mary's, Chelsea; the French Chapel, King Street, Portman Square; the Chapel of the Benedictine Convent at Hammersmith (now removed to Teignmouth, Devonshire); St. Mary's, Kensington; St. Anselm's, Lincoln's Inn Fields; St. Patrick's, Soho; St. Aloysius, Somers Town; St. James's, Spanish Place, Manchester Square; and the Assumption, Warwick Street, Golden Square; in all ten churches or chapels. There are now, in addition to the above, St. Mary and the Angels, Bayswater; the new church at Bow; the Oratory, Brompton; St. Bridget, Baldwin's Gardens; St. Joseph, Bunhill Row; the Servite Fathers, Chelsea; St. Peter's, Clerkenwell; SS. Mary and Michael, Commercial

Road; the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street; St. Thomas, Fulham; the German Church, Whitechapel; the church built by Sir George Bowyer, in Great Ormond Street; St. John the Baptist, Hackney; Holy Trinity, Brook Green; Nazareth House, Hammersmith; the chapel at Hampstead; the Dominicans' Church, Haverstock Hill; the Passionist Church, Highgate; the Augustinians' Church, Hoxton; the Sacred Heart, Holloway; St. John the Evangelist, Islington; the Italian Church, Hatton Wall; the Carmelite Church, Kensington; the church in Kentish Town; the church at Kilburn; Our Lady and St. Joseph, Kingsland; the new French Church, Leicester Square; the Rosary, Marylebone Road; St. Francis, Notting Hill; St. Charles, Ogle Street; the Polish Chapel, Gower Street; St. Mary's, Poplar; the Holy Family, Saffron Hill; St. Anne's, Spitalfields; Our Lady's, St John's Wood; St. Vincent de Paul, Stratford; the English Martyrs, Tower Hill; Our Lady of Grace, Turnham Green; St. Mary's, Horseferry Road, Westminster; and SS. Peter and Edward, Palace Street, Westminster—in all forty churches or chapels in thirty years (without counting many private chapels or convents, &c.), or fifty chapels, where thirty years ago there were but ten. And it should be borne in mind that of the new

churches many, such as the Oratory, Commercial Road, Farm Street, Islington, the Italian Church, Bayswater, Brook Green, St. John's Wood, and others, are of a size and beauty which thirty years ago would have been deemed a folly even to hope for. There are now as many masses said at the Oratory, Bayswater, and Farm Street, as thirty years ago there were in all the chapels in London, so great has been the increase of priests in London since 1839. On the south side of the water, in the diocese of Southwark, the change for the better is even more manifest than in that of Westminster; but, the congregation being poorer, the churches are also smaller. In what is now the diocese of Westminster, there were, in 1839 (writes the same correspondent), about seventy priests, and of these but two were regulars—Jesuits—who lived almost as private individuals in the Marylebone Road. There are now a hundred and thirty secular priests—fifteen Oratorians, sixteen Oblates of St. Charles, sixteen Jesuits, ten Marist Fathers, seven Oblates of Mary, six Carmelites, six Dominican Fathers (besides as many more not yet ordained), six Passionists (in addition to ten or twelve not yet ordained), five Servite Fathers, five Fathers of the Society of Missions (Italians), five

Augustinians, two Franciscans, and three Fathers of Charity—in all, between regulars, seculars, and priests not attached to any particular mission, there are two hundred and forty-one priests in this diocese. Of convents for women there were in 1839 two within what is now the diocese of Westminster; there are at present thirty-eight.

In calculating the amount of Roman Catholic influence and activity, we must remember that in their churches and chapels service is always being performed; and that thus one Romanist place of worship for all practical purposes may often be considered as equivalent to a dozen Protestant places, especially where the incumbents are of the class of old-fashioned clergymen who have a relish for port and what used to be considered a gentlemanly religion. For instance, let us see what is the round of services at the cathedral, Blomfield Street, Moorfields. On Sundays and holidays there is mass at seven, eight, nine, ten, and high mass at eleven. At three there is catechism, at four baptism, and on Wednesdays and Fridays at eleven A.M.; vespers, sermon, and benediction at seven. On week-days mass is performed at half-past seven, eight, and ten. On Thursday, rosary, sermon, and benediction at eight; on the other evenings of the

week rosary and night prayers at that hour. On the first Friday of the month there is sermon and benediction in honour of the Sacred Heart; on the second Friday of the month the Way of the Cross. There are the confessions, sometimes twice a day; and the Confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament, of the Sacred Heart, of Holy Angels for Children. Then there are the Societies, such as the Holy Family Total Abstinence Society, Holy Family Provident Society, Benevolent Society for the Relief of the Aged and Infirm Poor, and the Night Refuge for Homeless Women of Good Character. Nor is this the only way in which Roman Catholic influence is felt in this district. On good works the Roman Church has ever laid great stress, and thus we find from the centre in Blomfield Street the priests have specially assigned to them Newgate Prison, Old Bailey; Debtors' Prison, Lower Whitecross Street; St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Metropolitan Free Hospital, Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital,—an amount of exertion incompatible with spiritual ease and worldly enjoyment. I mention this to show that you are not to judge by what you see; attendance at any particular time is no criterion as to the state of the Catholic community. You may depend upon it that it is always much stronger than it

seems. Those present are but a tithe of the Romanists in any particular locality, and the admirable organization of their priests peculiarly fits them for aggressive purposes. I believe they are most successful in the low neighbourhoods, in the guilt gardens, in which a great metropolis like ours abounds. Their charities in London are very extensive. There is a Catholic Poor School Committee, a Westminster Diocesan Education Fund, an Aged Poor Society, an Association for the Propagation of the Faith, a Society of St. Anselm, for the Diffusion of Good Books. The Associated Catholic Charities, for educating and apprenticing the children of poor Catholics, have six schools in London. The Immaculate Conception Charity assists the clergy in providing for children whose faith or morals are exposed to imminent danger through the death or helplessness of their parents. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, whose chief object is visiting poor families at their own homes, has sixteen branches in London, besides a large Orphanage, at this time containing eighty boys, and a Catholic Shoeblack Brigade. The Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul have an establishment in Westminster. The oldest Roman Catholic charitable institution is the Benevolent Society for the Relief of the Aged and

Infirm Poor, founded in the year 1761. During the six winters the Providence Row Night Refuge for Homeless Women and Children has been in existence, 92,194 nights' lodgings, with suppers and breakfasts, have been given gratuitously. The only condition requisite for admission is that the applicant be homeless and without food and money. Such are the charities in London of the Roman Church.

As regards the pulpit, the Romanists are not wise in their generation. In London, where oratory can do so much, they fail to provide themselves with a grand and effective preacher. They have no Father Hyacinthe in London. Surely Italy might have sent us a Roman Catholic Gavazzi. Ireland supplies us with orators in abundance, but where are her eloquent priests? Cardinal Wiseman was florid and heavy. Archbishop Manning is more than sixty years old; and oratory, unlike wine, does not improve with age. His position, his talents, his zeal, incline you to hear him with respect, nothing more. As I have listened in some of the fine old cathedrals of the Continent to fiery priests, thundering away to crowded and attentive audiences, it has often occurred to me that it is just as well we have no such preachers in London to bring the Roman Catholic

Church into fashion; to make it the sensation of the hour; to do for it what Irving did for Presbyterianism when he drew around him to the Scotch Church in Hatton Garden all the beauty, the fashion, the genius, the intellect of his day.

The ordinary public service of a Roman Catholic Church requires little description; nor do you see it here as you do, for instance, in the magnificent cathedral of Antwerp, where, in the dim dusk of an autumn eve, while a flood of music floats down from the choir, and the gorgeous priests, with tapers and incense and costly banners, are sweeping, dimly seen, along the fretted aisles, the writer has often felt there is a strange, weird effect produced, which here you can never dream of. All is poor, something like a theatre by daylight, or a fancy ball when the delusions of gas have been dispelled by the too candid and impartial rays of the sun. There are the tapers and the usual processions, the vestments of various colours, and the music ever flowing, while at the altar end the priests are bowing and kneeling and scattering incense, and performing the service of the mass. If you have to listen to a sermon, it will not be a long one; and if you be a Protestant, it will strike you as verbose in style and un-English in tone.

Nearest to the altar will be the upper ten thousand, who come in broughams, and have fashionable aspirations. At the other end will be the very poor, such poor as you see nowhere else, scarcely educated enough to count, as they do on their knees, their beads, and certainly not competent to intelligent appreciation of the service. Of course the people kneel to the altar and cross themselves as they come in, and join in the worship with an appearance of piety (I mean the elder ones—young ladies who have eyes will use them, whether they be saints or sinners), which is pretty well for such an undemonstrative people as ourselves, but is nothing to that of the Moslem, who plumps on his knees, regardless of all, exclaiming *Allah hû akbar!* as the Muezzin calls to prayer.

On the Continent it fares ill with the Papacy. In France—in Italy—in Austria—even in Spain it has lost its power. Its chief strength at this time seems to consist in the sayings and doings of an increasing section of the Church of England. It appears there is a society actually in existence to form a union with Rome, and Mr. Malet, the Vicar of Ardley, in Hertfordshire, was lately sent on such a mission. As to the idea of Christian union no one can find fault with

that. It is lamentable that the Christian Church should be divided into sections that turn against each other the energies that should be devoted to the destruction of a common foe. That all should be brethren in Christ who believe in Him and lead a Christian life, is manifest, the common reader will say, in his desire after Christian unity. Mr. Malet comes then, of course, to all Christians, of whatever sect or denomination, and holds out to them the hand of fellowship? Alas! no; he does nothing of the kind. First of all he tells us he will not call himself a Protestant, then he dresses himself like a monk, and has his friends to call him "Brother Michael." He then gets letters from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dr. Manning, and goes to Rome humbly to ask the Pope to recognise the Church of England. Of course, at Rome, he is favourably received, and is delighted with all he saw, and seems to have swallowed all he heard, not even excepting the most monstrous fable or the absurdest legend. From Rome Brother Michael finds his way to Jerusalem—that Jerusalem that crucified the Lord of life, that stoned the prophets, that persecuted and slew the teachers and apostles and converts of early times—that Jerusalem where there is more downright lying in the

name of God, and under the plea of religion, if it be possible, than in Rome itself—that Jerusalem where the rival monks to-morrow would cut each others' throats if the Turkish soldiers did not keep them quiet;—and then to the Greeks and Roman monks he offers a similar request; and "the aged pilgrim," as he terms himself, returns delighted, believing that the Church of England will be permitted to join with the Pope in asserting all the frauds of the Papacy, and with the Greeks in celebrating that pious fiction of the holy fire once a year in Jerusalem. "The aged pilgrim" sees many favourable signs in this country. One is the reprint of Edward VI.'s Prayer-book for twopence; and another the fact that incense may be bought in many shops at the West End, and that half a pound lasts a long time. Now what must the cultivated, intellectual, and sceptical spirits of the age think of a man holding such opinions? What must be the effect of his teaching on such men, but to estrange them more and more from the Church and its institutions? Brother Michael falsifies history as much as he does religion. Actually he tells us there would have been no vice and crime in the country, no godless education, no pauper Bastilles, if Henry VIII. had not put down the *Holy Brotherhood.* Of course

he means by the "holy brotherhood" the lazy and dissolute monks. Why, if we were to sully our pages with but a tithe of the abominations and obscenities and rascalities recorded of the "holy brotherhood" in indisputable historical documents, every father of a family would hide away this volume. The less Brother Michael says about "the holy brotherhood" the better.

Again, let us take another illustration of High Church literature: "Innovations: a lecture delivered in the Assembly Rooms, Liverpool, by Richard Frederick Littledale, Priest of the Church of England." The aim of Dr. Littledale is to show that prayers for the dead, the choral service, the sign of the cross, the weekly offertory, the daily celebration of Holy Communion, the elevation of the Host, turning to the east, the division of the sexes in churches, the mixed chalice, incense, vestments, and lights are *not* innovations. He knows so little of history that he tells us that the conversion of our forefathers is due to Gregory the Great (the man under whom Popery was introduced into England); calls Edward VI. "*a tiger cub*," and speaks of Cranmer, the martyr for his religion, as having "*been arrested in his wicked career by Divine vengeance.*" He

says, "of the depth of infamy into which this man descended" he has not leisure to speak; and all the Reformers, according to him, were equally bad. Dr. Littledale says, "Documents, hidden from the public eye for centuries, in the archives of London, Venice, and Simancas, are now rapidly being printed, and *every fresh find establishes more clearly the utter scoundrelism of the Reformers.*"

The Doctor admits the Church of England was in need of a physician in Henry VIII.'s time. His language is, "A Church which could produce in its highest lay and clerical ranks such a set of miscreants as the leading English and Scottish Reformers must have been in a perfectly rotten state—as rotten as France was when the righteous judgment of the Great Revolution fell upon it." The Rev. Thomas W. Mossman, West Torrington Vicarage, Wragley, Yorkshire, goes further still. In a letter to Dr. Newman, he says he believes that a time "will come to pass that Anglicans will also see that it is God's will that they should submit to the Holy Apostolic See, and that it is their duty as well as their privilege to be in communion with that Bishop who alone is the true successor to St. Peter, and by Divine Providence the Primate of the Catholic Church. He speaks of the

"lurid murky flame of Protestantism enkindled in the sixteenth century;" and hail the light "once more beginning to beam upon us from the Eternal City, where the Prince of the Apostles and the Doctor of the Gentiles shed their blood." When such are the utterances of leading clergymen,—if the Church of England were Church of the nation as it claims to be, the language of Dr. Manning would be undeniably true. "Protestantism is dead in England. We may save the time which controversy wastes, and instead of going out into the battle-field, we may go into the harvest-field to reap and to bind and to gather our sheaves into our garner."

Dissent, however, has not been taken into account. It is rarely a Dissenter becomes a Roman Catholic. It is impossible, if he understands his principles, that he should. To too many it is the Church of England that leads to that of Rome.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE peculiarity of the Church of England, that by which it is distinguished from orthodox Dissent, is the priestly character of its claims, and its intolerance of other sects.

The "Tracts for the Times" tell us "that the Bishop is Christ's representative, and the priests the Bishop's, so that despising the clergy is despising Christ." "A person not commissioned may pretend to give the Lord's Supper, but it can afford no comfort to any one to receive it at his hands; and as for the person who takes it on himself without a warrant to minister in holy things, he is all the while treading in the steps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. It is only having received this commission that can give any security that the ministration of the Word and the Sacraments shall be effectual to the saving of your souls. The Dissenters have it not."

The Dean of Chichester writes—"Our ordinations

descend in a direct unbroken line from Peter and Paul. Unless Christ be spiritually present with the ministers of religion in their services, those services must be vain. But the only ministration to which He has promised his presence are those of the Bishops, who are successors of the first commissioned Apostles, and the other clergy acting under their sanction and authority."

The Bishop of Winchester says—"We believe that we do possess, as we cannot see that others do, Christ's direct commission for our ministry, and a certainty and fulness, therefore, of His presence and of His Sacramental working, which, to say the least, may be lacking elsewhere. If we do not hold as much as this we must dissent from the plain language of our own Ordination Service." The Bishop also denies that it is a superstitious theory that "the clergy can convey to the soul by a material intervention some spiritual influence in an occult manner."

The Rev. E. Blenkinson, in the "Church and the World," a book presented to Convocation by the Bishop of Oxford, says the Protestant bodies have cut themselves off from the participation of the one Spirit as living in the Church and flowing through

the Sacraments, which are the veins and arteries of the body." The last utterance on the subject is that of the Bishop of Ely, who places the first and undisputed General Councils as of equal authority with Scripture. The Catechism teaches Baptismal Regeneration. The clergy also tell us that they are called by the Holy Ghost, that the Bishop has conferred on them spiritual graces by the laying on of hands. This is the theory of the Church of England. In accordance with this in time past, it drove out the Evangelicals on Bartholomew Day, and has at any rate till our time prosecuted Broad Churchmen for heresy.

The bitterest opponents of this theory are the Evangelicals. It is a singular and noteworthy fact, that the theology dearest to the hearts of the people is that which teaches in the plainest manner the literal inspiration of the Bible, the doctrine of Original Sin, of Predestination, of everlasting damnation, of a Devil ever thwarting the designs of a benevolent Deity, and seeking whom he may devour. Yet the character given by Dr. Arnold of the Evangelical clergy is still true, and accounts for the little influence they have in educated circles. Another fact also becomes increasingly prominent: their readiness to swallow their words, to quietly accept whatever may

be offered them by their opponents apparently merely for the sake of position in society. Every now and then a crisis occurs in the history of the Church. If Baptismal Regeneration, for instance, be ruled to be permissible they must leave, and then when the time comes for them to arise and become martyrs, they quietly pocket their principles and remain. Of course they plead their greater opportunities of usefulness, as if religion were better served by dishonesty than by honesty,—as if the cause of God were better advanced by falsehood than by truth,—as if position as regards society were of more importance than the man's consciousness of independence and honourable life. For the ritualist or the Broad Churchman it is no difficult matter to remain in the church in company with the Evangelical; but they, in accordance with his theory, are teaching soul-destroying errors; yet he remains with them, and is, according to his idea, a partaker in their sins.

The characteristic of our day is the Broad Churchmanship, which rejects the common theology as a prejudice well fitted for certain times, but unworthy of credence now. Of this party are the ablest men in the Church; all who are disgusted with the childishness of ritualism—with the narrowness of orthodox

formulas, turn to them, and hail them as the regenerators of Church and State. Such men as Dean Stanley and Mr. Maurice are a power in the land. They walk hand in hand with the poets and men of science of our time. In their teaching is gathered together much that is best and truest in the wisdom of the past. The difficulty of their position is that they are tied down as strongly as they can be to orthodoxy, and half their strength is wasted in the effort to show they have a right to be where they are. Nevertheless it is quite true that there can be no honest faith without honest doubt; that we fight our fears and gather strength; that as we know more, we feel how outworn is the old creed of Christendom. Sir J. D. Coleridge tells us the Articles are Articles of peace—that is, for the sake of uniformity a minister may make statements which he cannot believe. But a man who cannot trifle with words is denied all this liberty; he is tied hand and foot. The State gives him moral prestige, supremacy, wealth, on certain conditions. The Dissenter is free; the wildest ranter has a liberty which an Archbishop may sigh for in vain. Such is the law. A State Church such as is desired by Broad Churchmen is an impossibility.

And yet in spite of the rival and differing parties

in the Church, and in spite of the fact that Churchmen themselves are longing to be free of the fetters of the State, I know not that the Church of England, as regards London, was ever stronger than now. The layman has little sympathy with Church squabbles: he goes to church feeling that in doing so he is not committed to any form of belief or worship. Dissent requires some sort of faith as preliminary to fellowship. In the Church you avoid all this: the Puseyism of the pulpit seldom extends to the pew. Then, again, there is a natural yearning in all minds after national union in religious as well as political matters. The higher class of Dissenters display this feeling in an extraordinary degree. Their chapels are built like churches—they cling to the steeple which the stern old Puritans considered an abomination—the meeting-house has ceased to exist. Day by day Dissent gets rid of all its characteristics—its ministers assume a clerical appearance—they adopt the Prayer-book as their model—they now listen to read sermons and read prayers. Of late years their leaders have grown rich and respectable, and anxiously disclaim all connexion with the loud and exciting form of worship that has attractions for the ignorant. You may safely assume that the teaching of modern Dis-

sent is indirectly in favour of the Establishment. Dissenters tell us they have modified their customs in order to retain their hold upon the young of the wealthy classes. But they cannot be retained by means like these. It has almost become a proverb, that in the third generation they will pass through the chapel to the church. Half the great mercantile houses of London and the empire were founded by Dissenters whose sons, as they have grown rich and cultivated, feel more and more the awkward isolation of Dissent. Increasingly this feeling is spreading among Dissenters, and the Church, if it were wise—its history is a career of blunder upon blunder—would have laid its plans to recover such. All the levers of society have been at its disposal. The Establishment rolls in wealth; there is no other Church in the world so wealthy; the aristocracy are bound to support it. Literally, there is in our land no career for a Dissenter. Dissent is a stigma in society. Even men who have no religious predilections would scorn the name of Dissenter. The schools, the universities—all have wealth and honour for those who will conform; and for those who conscientiously refuse to do so—exclusion and disgrace.

In London, within twelve miles of the Post-office,

there are some seven hundred churches and chapels connected with the Church, and about treble that number of officiating clergy. At St. Paul's it is estimated that on special occasions as many as 7000 or 8000 persons take part in the services. For the special evangelization of the metropolis there is what is called the Bishop of London's Fund. In the summer of last year the Bishop of London stated that towards the sum proposed to be raised for that purpose, 360,000*l.* had been subscribed. By means of that subscription 200 clergymen have been added to the diocese, and contributions made to the erection of 69 new churches and of 20 parsonages. Sites also had been secured for 33 more churches, 27 schools, 15 parsonages, and 4 mission stations. 15,000*l.* had been expended for educational purposes; upwards of 9000*l.* for 53 Scripture readers; about 2000*l.* for 27 parochial mission women, and 2670*l.* towards the rent and expenses of mission rooms. It says something for the Church that it has thus raised funds for such purposes. When Bishop Blomfield appealed for 10 new churches for Bethnal Green, and raised sufficient money both to build and to a great extent endow them, it was feared that he had called forth such an expression of Christian liberality as would exhaust

the resources of wealthy Church people in the great metropolis for many years to come. Since that time it is estimated that 1,700,000*l.* have been expended in London on churches and endowments. I am not aware that any other religious sect can say as much. The *Times* estimated that there are as many as 85 clerical charities in London.

In the City of London the Church does not seem to thrive. The *Church Times* published a kind of census of fourteen of the City churches drawn up after personal inspection during service time not long ago. It gives the value of the benefice, and the number of persons actually present when the correspondent entered the church.

	Annual Value.	No. Present.
St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield . . .	£680	40
St. Anne and Agnes, St. Anne's Lane . . .	626	25
St. Michael le Querne, Foster Lane	300	closed
St. Mary Magdalene, Old Fish Street . . .	230	18
St. Nicholas Cole Abbey	270	closed
St. Bennet's, Paul's Wharf	254	6
St. Nicholas Queenhithe, Thames Street . .	260	11
Allhallows, Bread Street	382	3
St. Martin Pomray, Old Jewry	410	1
St. Margaret, Bread Street	287	3
St. Peter le Poor, Old Broad Street . . .	1725	20
St. Martin Outwich, Bishopsgate Street . .	1100	6
St. James, Mitre Square	300	20
Allhallows with St. Bennet, Lombard Street .	650	9
	£7074	162

In the City there are 105 churches, parochial and district, and in the City the superiority of the Church over Dissent is manifest. The Jews, the Greeks, the Roman Catholics, the Wesleyans, the Baptists, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians altogether have but twenty-six chapels in the City.

From the beginning of the long reign of George III. to its close—that is from 1760 to 1820—there were not six new churches erected in the metropolis.

When the Great Fire had devoured the eighty-nine parish churches of London, Sir Christopher Wren superintended the building of fifty-three at the same time that he was building St. Paul's. Various Acts were passed in the reign of Queen Anne and George I. to increase church accommodation in London, and Commissioners were appointed to apply the coal duties from the year 1716 to the year 1724, to the building of fifty-two new churches. Much of the money was misappropriated and only eleven were built, and a subsequent fund of 360,000*l.* was granted, to be paid in instalments of 21,000*l.* a year. In 1818, Parliament was prevailed on to vote a million and a half for building churches throughout the country as a thank-offering for the termination of the war; and in the same year the Incorporated Church Build-

ing Society was founded, to build, enlarge, and repair churches; of which many, such as those in Bethnal Green, Hackney, St. Pancras, Battersea, were in London. Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, persuaded the vestry of Islington to vote 12,000*l.* for church building. In 1836 Bishop Blomfield inaugurated the Metropolis Churches Fund, to which he himself gave up sinecure patronage at St. Paul's to the extent of 10,000*l.* a year. Sixty-eight churches were built by this fund at the cost of 136,787*l.*, before it was merged, in 1854, in the Diocesan Church Building Society. During the twenty-eight years of his episcopate, Bishop Blomfield consecrated 108 churches in London. The whole number of churches ten years ago, writes Mr. Bosanquet in 1863, was only 498. Now Churchmen aim at absorbing the entire metropolis. "But in order to secure for every 2000 of our population one clergyman," said the present Archbishop of Canterbury in 1867, "we shall need twice as many additional clergymen as we have yet, with a proportionate number of schools." And here as elsewhere it seems to be true that supply creates demand. As soon as a church is opened it is well filled.

The Bishop of Winchester's Fund, also known as the

South London Church Extension Fund, is a similar effort to supply the spiritual need of that part of London which belongs to the diocese of Winchester.

THE DEAF AND DUMB AT CHURCH.

In London there are two thousand persons born deaf and dumb. To the sweet music of speech, whether in the way of conversation or lecture, grave or gay, or song however sacred and Divine, they are insensible. It follows almost as a natural consequence that they are mute, that from their lips can never come the thoughts that breathe and words that burn. It is almost impossible for us to measure adequately the greatness of their loss or the depth of their desolation. How in some degree to make it up to them, to raise them in the scale of being, to teach them to think, and feel, and learn, and to enable them to communicate to others the results, is certainly not one of the least praiseworthy of the many praiseworthy Christian efforts of our day. With this view two courses of action have been followed. A Jewish school has been established at 44, Burton Crescent, where the system of teaching by articulation and lip-reading is pursued. For some time a similar system has been in successful operation in Rotterdam. As to

the merits of the system a warm dispute has been for a considerable time in progress in America. Its advocates tell us that when these results shall have been made known, and the attention of the philanthropist and man of science shall have been directed to them, the days of the old system of dactylology, or communication by the aid of fingers, will be numbered. They ask, triumphantly, What parents will be content that their children shall continue to communicate their thoughts and wishes by the aid of signs, when it can be proved to a demonstration that 999 deaf mutes out of every 1000 possess the faculty of speech, and that such faculty can be successfully utilised? Mr. Isaac tells us, that at Burton Crescent, after only eighteen months' instruction, a deaf child who had never previously uttered a clear sound, recited a verse of the National Anthem in a way that brought tears into the eyes of many hearers. The questions are put by the teacher in audible language; and the deaf mute, by aid of lip-reading—another marvel of the system in which the eye does duty for the ear—comprehends every question, and gives answers audibly and distinctly. The Association in aid of the Deaf and Dumb, of which the Rev. Samuel Smith is the able and indefatigable secretary, are,

however, doubtful of the new system—and certainly lip-reading seems liable to give facilities for great misapprehension as to the speaker's meaning—and prefer to continue the system which the society was organized in 1840 to teach, and under which it has worked more or less successfully ever since. Under this system has sprung up a deaf and dumb church-going public. On Sundays there are five or six places opened for such in London; on Tuesday evenings there are two, the principal one being held in the fine old church of St. Lawrence Jewry, near the Guildhall—one of Sir Christopher Wren's churches—in which are monuments to Wilkins, the learned Bishop of Chester, and Archbishop Tillotson, whose lot was no peaceful one, and of whom it is worthy of remark that in the language of Jortin he broke through an ancient and fundamental rule of controversial theology, "Allow not an adversary either to have common sense or common honesty." Poor Tillotson, you see, never got over the disadvantages of Dissenting training.

But to return to the deaf and dumb. Inside this handsome church you will find any Tuesday evening about eight o'clock, some fifty or sixty of them sitting near the reading desk. Most of them are men and women in a humble position in life, engaged in

various callings in the neighbourhood, more, however, in the east than the west. The desire to profit by such services seems on the increase. They have, for instance, at St. Lawrence, double the number they had, and the same may be said with regard to the services conducted morning and evening at the Polytechnic Institution. Nor are these services held in vain. Every year some are prepared for confirmation, and special celebrations of the Holy Communion are held for their benefit. To the ordinary attendants, including even such as have little need of an interpreter to explain the subject or to help them to follow the services in church, the committee report, "these services and lectures are profitable." "I have felt it a great privilege to attend the services," said one, "which have been a great comfort and benefit to me, and I hope I shall remember what I have heard" (it is to be presumed, by "heard," the writer means what he saw: his language is conventional). "After I left school I felt so lost I could not hear what was said in churches, and now I am very happy in attending them." In another way, also, the religious condition of these afflicted ones is kept in view. The Society employs missionaries engaged in house-to-house visitation. By these mis-

sionary agents, acting in concert with the parochial clergy, a personal acquaintance is maintained with the deaf and dumb scattered over London, and a most marked improvement in their character, conduct, and intelligence is the result of the supervision exercised. The society is also engaged in promoting the erection of a church for the deaf and dumb. For this purpose 550*l.* have already been subscribed. In the Old Kent Road there is a Deaf and Dumb Asylum, and in other parts of the metropolis there are societies for their special benefit. Of course no mere outsider can give an account of a service with the deaf and dumb. It is easy to realize songs without words, but not so easy to realize public prayer and preaching in which no audible sound is heard, in which the service is conducted as it were by pantomime. As much as possible the rubric is observed, the deaf and dumb obey the instructions of the Prayer-book, and stand where standing is prescribed, and "sign" the response to the Lord's Prayer, Creed, Confession, &c. As to the sermon, all that can be said is that it comes up to the Demosthenic standard for eloquence—action, action, action. Among the deaf and dumb the best preacher must be the best actor. Not merely are the fingers in constant requisition, but every

part of the preacher's face, as much as possible, is speaking all the time, either in the way of exhortation or entreaty. Great use, as we may imagine, is also made of the arms, and the body sways backward and forward as if to lend expression to such ideas as it may be the design of the teacher to convey. The great aim of these services is educational. They are intended to afford such an insight into the meaning and use of the Book of Prayer, that the deaf and dumb may be enabled to join intelligently in the public worship of the Church of England, and undoubtedly it is desirable that the terrible sense of isolation so natural under the circumstances should be got rid of, that the deaf and dumb should feel that they are part and parcel of the universal Church. Nevertheless there must be a deaf and dumb pulpit from which may flow the ever fructifying stream of Christian truth—a pulpit which the deaf and dumb may feel exists especially for them. Of this pulpit at present the Rev. Samuel Smith is the most distinguished orator, and as you watch him, though you cannot understand him, you cannot but wonder at his marvellous skill. Evidently his heart is in his work; equally evident is it that he has to complain of no wandering eyes. Every hearer is intent, many seem really

devout and find the privilege one not lightly to be esteemed. The deep strain of the organ is not there, you miss the song of praise, you hear no penitential chant. From no living tongue falls the sweet promise of salvation and eternal life, from those sealed and silent lips escapes no audible prayer. Yet we know that

"God reveals Himself in many ways,"

and that He may be met with even among the deaf and dumb.

A SUNDAY IN JAIL.

Most travellers by the Great Northern Railway must have been struck with a feudal castle apparently, just what you might expect to see on the Rhine, but certainly not such a building as you would look for in the immediate vicinity of the Cattle Market and of Mr. Mark Wilks's overflowing congregation. As you approach it, all around you are genteel villas and desirable residences; the neighbourhood has an air of comfort and respectability; the inhabitants seem substantial and well to do—in short, to belong to the upper strata of that middle class which in our land, at any rate since the last of the Barons fell on Barnet Common, has been a powerful influence for good in England and all over the world. You would scarce fancy that feudal castle, with its "jutty, frieze, and

coigne of vantage," was a jail, or that inside it there were shut up between three and four hundred rogues and vagabonds, old and young, male and female, who have outraged the laws of their country, and have been sent there, if possible, to receive punishment for their offences, and to learn to do better for the future. Yet such in reality is the case. You are standing outside the City House of Correction, which was built some few years ago at a cost of 100,000*l.* Into this place it is rare for good characters to obtain an admission. They may knock at the door, but it will not be opened unless they are furnished with an order from the Secretary of State, or one of the visiting magistrates, who are aldermen of London city.

In this necessarily short paper it is not our intention to describe the general arrangements of a place which we fear to too many of its inmates can have but few terrors. There are homes outside of filth, and want, and degradation; where, morning, noon, and night all that is decent, that is tender, or true, or pure is crushed out of man, woman, and child; where you can scarce believe man was made in the image of his Maker, that he is a little lower than the angels; where you feel that rather than have company with such you would associate with the beasts of the field,

or dwell in some lonely isle "far off amid the melancholy main." To such, such a place as Holloway, with its cleanliness, and fresh air, and wholesome food, educational advantages, and considerate attendance, must be simply—in spite of its drawbacks of the treadmill, &c.—a millennium; and the question arises whether we have hit on the most effectual mode of making the dread of jail an incentive to the criminal class to keep out. Another question also suggests itself: Is it right thus to tenderly treat dishonesty, when honest poverty in our midst undoubtedly fares so bad? Here, however, that subject cannot be discussed, neither can we touch on that other question, at this time strongly agitating the aldermanic mind, as to the propriety of allowing prisoners to have a religion of their own, and to be attended by their own religious ministers—a question the majority of the court evidently think absurd, for, as Alderman Cotton observed—and our readers must remember Alderman Cotton aspired to the honour of a seat in Parliament —"if every dissenting sect were to apply for facilities for the celebration of their religious services, what would become of them? They should have to give the Baptists a pool to bathe in, the Mormons a harem, and the Shakers a circle in which they might make

their dance." Of course, then, when I write of a Sunday in Holloway jail, I write of a Sunday where the services—there are two, morning and afternoon—are Protestant, and Protestant according to the Church of England. As the worthy chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Owen, is now about to preach, let us accompany him. We follow him up a flight of stairs, and are at church and in jail. To most of us it is to be hoped the sensation is a novel one.

In a small gallery, under which is the clerk and in the middle of which is the pulpit, we take our seat. The chaplain, of course, is seen by all. A red curtain, which we are requested not to remove, hides us from the congregation. However, we can see them nevertheless. On the right of the preacher, partitioned off so as to be seen by none but himself, are the women prisoners; on his left, in another recess, are the boys, little lads for whose offences against society others and older ones are certainly more responsible than themselves. Before us, in rows gradually ascending, are ranged the male adults—pale, melancholy-looking men, who form the principal portion of this sad community. While they are seating themselves let us note the cheerful, neat appearance of the place. Not a speck of dirt is anywhere visible.

You might, to use a common but expressive form of speech, eat your dinner off the floor. The wooden ceiling is very light and airy; the windows are plain and plentiful; the walls are bare, but of snowy whiteness. Underneath is the communion-table, and once a quarter such as the chaplain considers truly penitent are permitted to partake of it. Some dozen officials, in uniform, on raised seats, are ranged in different parts of the chapel, and when all have taken their places the service is commenced by singing, in which generally the wife of the chaplain—a lady not unknown in the literary world — assists by instrumental performance. This part of the service is especially remarkable. The prisoners are fond of singing. There is weekly a class for this purpose, and they enter into it with all their heart and soul. Of course the tunes are very simple and old-fashioned, such as we used to hear, but they are sung with a fervour of which few outsiders can have an idea. One could not help thinking of Longfellow's lines:

> "Loud he sang the Psalms of David,
> He a negro and enslaved."

The book used is the collection of Psalms and Hymns issued by the Religious Tract Society, and

those selected are chiefly of a penitential and consolatory character. The soothing influence of this part of the service is, according to the experience of the chaplain, very great indeed. It was also very evident that the men took great pleasure in the responses, and one could not but hope that it was not all assumed; that when they confessed themselves "miserable sinners," that when they exclaimed, "We have followed too much the desires and devices of our own hearts," or that when after the chaplain read each one of the Commandments they prayed, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law"—that to some, at any rate, these words were full of meaning, and did represent actual workings of the mind. In chanting also they join, and the way in which they find out the proper places in the Prayer-book, or in which they turn up the portions of Scripture read, or find out the text, or repeat the Creed, is a model to others, and gives an illustration of the existence of a very desirable influence which the men appear to be under. It must be remembered that they are there by themselves, that no external eyes are on them, that to many of them the service is an unaccustomed novelty, and that to those to whom it is not it affords a welcome relief

after the monotony of the week. Be this as it may, nowhere in London or the country, at home or abroad, have I seen a quieter or better-behaved congregation. If you did not see the prison garb, and the number on the arm, and the little brass plate on the breast, you might fancy you were in the midst of an earnest Christian people, who for purposes of their own excluded women, and babies, and old men. The chaplain's sermon generally occupies from fifteen to twenty minutes, and is of a character adapted to his audience; yet I must confess the attention paid to it was not equal to that which was shown in the more active parts of the service. The pulpit has yet to learn to be plain and practical; and chaplains, it is to be feared, with very remarkable exceptions, are inclined to be conventional. Still, the preacher did his best, was kind and simple, and when he speaks of such topics as godly sorrow for sin, and of turning away from it to God, or of the many ways in which men fall from rectitude, many evidently, especially of the younger ones, seem desirous to understand and realize it, and to lay hold of something spiritually soothing and appropriate. In many faces was to be seen an expression of great earnestness, forming a contrast to the unconcerned look of the indifferent. As the

chaplain visits them all the week, and reads prayers to them every day, his influence must of course, whether in the pulpit or out, be great. Be this as it may, to many it is manifest that to them has arisen unmixed advantage from spending a Sunday in jail.

HIGH CHURCH REVIVALISTS.

What is a mission? In a book of the mission edited by the Society of St. John the Evangelist, at Cowley, Oxford, I read—1. It is a special call from God. "Jonah preached a mission to Nineveh, and the whole city repented and was saved. Lot preached one night to Sodom, but they would not hearken, and were destroyed by fire." 2. It is a time of special grace. The men who have devoted twelve days to a mission in London have taken a bold and brave step in connexion with the Church of England. As much as Sodom or Nineveh, London, with its pauperism, and vice, and crime; with its nobles stooping to the foul companionship of the jockey and the courtesan; with its high-born daughters rushing to see *Formosa* at Drury Lane; with its merchant princes deeming it no disgrace to be honest as the world goes, or as the times will allow—needs if it would be saved from the fearful

fate of Sodom, or the decline of Nineveh, that it should be specially preached to and called on everywhere to repent. For twelve days, then, some hundred churches have been open nearly all day long, in addition to the Sunday services, which have been conducted as usual. At All Saints, Margaret Street, for instance, the first service began at a quarter to seven in the morning, and the last did not close till past nine P.M. Church people are not partial to innovations. It was only this week a lady was complaining to the writer that in the parish in which she resided a week-evening service had been introduced. As if two services on a Sunday were not quite enough. And truly, as times go, she had reason to complain. Two such sermons as one generally hears read in that lackadaisical, sing-song manner, which seems to be the only thing clerical the raw curate picks up at Oxford or Cambridge, are quite enough. If such were the preachers employed in the recent mission (I see their number is set down at forty-eight), it must have proved a failure. At All Saints, so far from the mission being a failure, it has been, I should think, a success. I have always respected the Ritualistic clergy; I have always given them credit for honestly attempting to develope the Catholic element,

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of which there is a considerable leaven, in the historical English Church; I have always felt that amongst them rather than amongst popular evangelical preachers, whose favourite haunts are the drawing-rooms of dowagers, or Broad Churchmen, the delight of sceptical peers, are to be found the men most ready to take up the cross and bear the yoke; but I had no idea they could preach, or if they did that men of sense could listen. I have found out my mistake. I have been one of the thousands who have listened to Mr. Body, of Wolverhampton, and I never heard or saw within the walls of a church a man so absorbed in his message, so carried away with its import, so imbued with a sense of its Divine reality. I may also add that a more awkward-looking, ill-favoured clergyman I never saw ascend the pulpit stairs.

But these people were all Ritualists—believers in form? Well, they are; there was an exaggeration of form, I frankly admit; there was a great deal more crossing the forehead and the breast than we English approve of; there was far too much of appearance of devotion. A man may worship God in a hearty, cheerful way as well as on his knees and with elongated jaw. The preacher himself at times

assumed an air of needless imbecility as he stood with drooping head and with hands folded, as if engaged in secret prayer; lank and pale, and with a sickly smile upon his face, as was the manner of mediæval and pre-Raphaelite saints. And then of course, like most of the services of all churches, of whatever denomination, the harlot, and the publican, and the sinner to be called to repentance, kept away. It is a sign of respectability to attend a place of worship, and people who come to church in neat broughams, who are partial to diamond studs, who wear brilliants on their fingers, are eminently respectable; still there were poor sinners there, and the place was full, and many were evidently deeply smitten, for the apostolic fervour of the pulpit crept from row to row till the sinner and the sceptic ceased to sneer, and all seemed mastered and subdued. Before the service began half the audience seemed engaged in silent prayer, and at the close that silent prayer was resumed.

It is difficult to describe this new burning and shining light. A *verbatim* report of his sermon would convey no meaning. Who cares to read the sermons of Whitefield or Wesley? I heard him twice. In the afternoon he gave an address on the subject of prayer.

There he stood in the pulpit, without gown or surplice, dressed in plain black cloth, mouthing and ranting apparently in the wildest manner, just as on the boards of the theatre they love to represent a Chadband or a Stiggins. His dark short hair was brushed right down to his eyes. The principal feature was his enormous mouth, over which an unripe moustache seemed struggling into life. One moment his face was brought down to a level with the pulpit, the next it was shot forward almost into the faces of the occupants of the nearest seats, and the next he seemed to spring on his toes, with each arm extended over his head, and as far apart as possible. In the same manner the tones of his address were proportionately varied. One moment he spoke in a whisper, the next in a quiet, conversational manner, the next there came a thundering blast as if he sought to arouse the dead. Was this art, or was this passion? The former, says the sceptic. The tragedian can mouth it just as grandly, on the stage. But as the greatest tragedians are the men who, like Kean, felt—ay, even to their inmost core—all the agony they endeavoured to realize and express, so I would say of Mr. Body that the intenseness with which he realized what he said elevated him, and enabled him to embody, as it

were, the sublime of human passion. For instance, at All Saints over the altar is a crucifix. In his evening sermon he was pleading that as much now as ever was it our duty to confess Christ before man. It was grand for the Crusaders to save the Holy Land from the Infidels. It was grand the way in which St. Agnes and St. Polycarp died, in which the early Christian martyrs lived and died. Nowadays the Church and the world were far too friendly, and what was the result? That we tried not how much we could do for Christ, but how most easily we could save our souls. We sang the song of martyrs, we acted the part of cravens. "Look," said the preacher, turning round to the crucifix, "look at the Saviour on the Cross. Who placed him there? who made those wounds there?—the world. And you try to be friendly with the world." So intense was the power of the speaker that all seemed awestruck, as if before their very eyes stood the Saviour with His wounded and bleeding limbs. Another wonderful thing about the preacher is his common sense. "Look here, now," said he, "here are a million of people who do not go anywhere on a Sunday in London. Suppose each one of you now resolve to go to the east of London and bring the people to church. Suppose

you were to be street preachers. I don't see why you should not. I don't see why some of you laymen should not come and preach in this pulpit. Do you want your commission? Here it is, 'Let him that heareth say Come,' and if you did this you would accomplish more good between now and Christmas than would be done by the Society for the Employment of Additional Curates if they worked till Doomsday." Well, there is a freshness, and a vigour, and a common sense about this style of remark one does not often meet in the pulpit. And the service itself, too, was the perfection of common sense. It began in the evening at eight. It was over by nine. It began with a short prayer and a hymn which did not take ten minutes, and it ended the same way. There was a service after to which many stopped, but short as the service was I fear the speaker had overtaxed himself. He speaks from the chest deeply, hoarsely, and his throat gave him a good deal of trouble at the end Sometimes in his homely Saxon and ironical way he reminds you of George Dawson, but then George Dawson never stirred the depths. The only man I have ever seen equally effective was J. B. Gough, but then Gough was no orator, and could only act one character, while Mr. Body is a master of

powerful language, and words never fail. He can read and sing also as well as he can preach, and while I write I seem to see him as he stood giving out the hymn after the sermon, as a general might marshal his troops—

"Onward, Christian soldiers!
Marching on to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before."

A SUNDAY WITH THE LUNATICS.

One of the earliest of the Gospel stories is that which tells how the Saviour healed the man possessed with devils. It is only of late that we have learned to imitate His example. For hundreds of years society has gone on torturing the mad, hardening the hardened, depraving the depraved. We are now retracing our steps; we are atoning nobly for sins of omission and commission on the part of our ancestors. It would do good to some of the noisy poor who waste their time in low pot-houses talking of their rights, when all that a man has a right to is what he can earn, to look over such places as Hanwell and Colney Hatch, where pauper lunatics are lodged in a palace, waited on by skilful male and female attendants, spend their days in light and airy rooms as

clean as wax-work, have four meals a day, and every reasonable want supplied. I have no doubt that many a careworn City man, as he has been hurried backwards and forwards past such places by the train, has often wished that in some such stately pile he had a niche where he could come of a night, after the day's work was over, to breathe the fresh air, to tread the fresh grass, and to smell the fresh flowers. I propose to gratify this wish,—come with me, respected reader, and in the twinkling of an eye you will find yourself in Colney Hatch.

It is on Sunday, a day when the asylum is closed to the public. Far and near this bright sunshiny afternoon there seems resting over all a Sabbath calm. On the neighbouring rails no trains are running; the doors of the Station Hotel are shut; no traffic occupies the road and distracts your attention. You gaze on fields as yet yellow with no ripening corn, meadows as yet uncarpeted by flowers, trees as yet leafless. Farther off on the distant ridge we see lofty mansions.

"All bright and glittering in the smokeless air."

Arrived at the gate we ring a bell; the porter opens it to us. We enter our name in the visitors'

book, and descend the gravel slope on which the asylum is placed. All round is a wide extent of land in which the lunatics take exercise and occasionally work. There are none outside now, for it is the hour appointed for Divine service. The door is opened for us by an attendant, who understands our mission. He takes us upstairs and we find ourselves seated in a little gallery set apart for the leading officers of the asylum. Just below us is the pulpit; on a line with it, but a little farther off, is the reading-desk; opposite us, at the other end of the room, is the organ. From the floor on which the pulpit is placed there is a gradually ascending series of benches; on our right are ranged the female, on our left the male inmates of the house. It may be that there are some four or five hundred present. Here and there amongst them you see their well-clad keepers. The lunatics attend this service willingly, it is a pleasure for them to come, it is a punishment for them to keep away. On the whole they behave very well, and, as is often the case outside the walls of lunatic asylums, the females greatly preponderate. From our gallery in this clean, cheerful chapel we look down upon the group below. The sight is an unmitigatedly sad one; we fail to see a single pleasant face. The chapel, considering who

are the audience, is almost light and cheerful. It is painful to turn from its white walls and rafters to the crowd beneath and realize how much darker and more cheerless is the human face when it is void of intelligence. In this chapel you do not see the worse cases, they are properly concealed from the spectator's eye; it is enough to know that they are equally wisely and carefully tended with those before you. The women are far more troublesome than the men. All are hideously ugly, such as Fuseli might dream of after a supper of pork-chops, such as, perhaps, that wonderful painter at Brussels, whose pictures form the chief modern attraction of the place, could have painted in that queer little imitation Roman ruin in which he lived and died, but such as no living artist, at any rate in England, could portray. You feel inclined to exclaim with Banquo—

> "What are these,
> So withered and so wild in their attire,
> That look not like the inhabitants of earth,
> And yet are on't?"

Some sit as living corpses, others with scowling eye, flesh-and-blood pictures of despair. Others there be who have driven themselves mad with their bad tempers and unruly tongues. You can read all that

in many a repulsive and reddened face. This one had led a gay life; what a termination for a career of pleasure! That one has become what she is by drinking; this one by the grand passion which underlies all human life, past or present, all philosophy, subjective or objective, all religion, true or false. Amongst the men you do not see so many thoroughly dead and vacant faces; you will also see among them more diversity of action and a greater assertion of individuality. Some look angry, some silly, but few have that God-forsaken appearance sad to behold anywhere, but especially on the face of what might have been possibly under happier circumstances a tender, loving woman. But the tones of the organ indicate that the service is commencing. Men and women are now hushed and still; in spite of an occasional friendly word with a neighbour, whom very probably they pity as "As mad as a March hare," males and females come and go quietly and comfortably. Most of them have Prayer-books, and make a proper use of them; they join in the responses with great fervour, and repeat the Apostles' Creed, and bow at the name of Jesus quite as decidedly and uncompromisingly as do any of the sane outside. As to the singing, it may be briefly said that it is loud, and

is all the better and more harmonious for the organ, which, especially at the end of the last verse, is prolonged unusually, and with a view to the drowning sounds of an unnecessary character. Indeed, this tendency to individual utterance is the chief danger of such a meeting as this. You can detect notes occasionally very undeniably loud and defiant, and, as it is, one female at the close of the sermon begins talking so loud as to require that two female attendants should take her off as quickly as possible; not that any one is disturbed—oh no! nothing of the kind. In a Belgravian chapel or church such an interruption would have created a far greater disturbance. Here no one is surprised, the preacher goes on just the same, and not a lunatic takes the trouble to turn round and look at the disorderly sister. Out she goes, and no one cares. With this one exception the service was most decorous. One very plain young female appeared to me to be too much taken up with her fruitless endeavour to attract the eye of a very plain young person of the opposite sex, who did not in any way seem to respond. Another also seemed to be smiling joyfully many times, when in the sermon there was nothing to call forth such an external manifestation. Many also seemed to hear with intel-

ligent attention, but as a rule the audience listened to the preacher with that resigned and spiritless expression with which most church-goers are but too familiar. Yet the preacher was short and simple, and spoke of matters in which all could take an interest, and which all could understand, of Him who hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, who was bruised for our iniquities, and with whose stripes we are healed. It is cheering to think that even here some do not hear of Him in vain.

LAY WORK IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Dissenters have taught Churchmen a lesson, which they are, at any rate in our time, not slow to learn. The theory of the Church has been up to our own day almost exclusively sacerdotal. Its parochial system is, as Canon Champneys termed it upon one occasion, "a great allotment system," and to work that system there was the priest with his assistant deacon. That time has gone. There was time also when it was quite sufficient to argue against anything that it was a custom practised among the Dissenters. The reader of Wilberforce's Life will remember how anxious was that good man that the Dissenters should not take up the question of sending the Gospel to

India, as if they did he feared their activity would put a stop to all Church action in the matter. It is not so now. The pressure of public opinion, the dreadful mass of heathenism which had grown up while the Church slumbered, the growing influence of Dissent, the increasing spirituality of the clergy, the zeal and liberality of their people, have in London completely altered the position of the Church of England. Never were her services so well attended, never were her clergy more useful than now. At the West-end the Church is the fashion. In the East, where the poverty is too great to admit of the existence of a church on Dissenting principles, the Church is in some parishes the only place of worship, and the Church clergyman the only religious teacher. I have heard of one parish where the utmost that the clergyman could get for religious and charitable purposes from his wealthiest parishioners was but ten shillings; and of another, where the clergyman spent five hundred a year in charity. It is in these parts of London that the Church is most useful, most successful, most untiring in its operations, most lavish of its spiritual and temporal good. The laity give munificently. For example, the Countess of Aberdeen gives three hundred a year for the support of

a clergyman in the East, who preaches in a church built by Lord Haddo; the Marquis of Salisbury has subscribed 300*l.* for a similar purpose; and the clergy, whether vicars or curates, devote themselves unremittingly to the performance of their sacred duties. Under these circumstances they find themselves unequal to the task, and appeal to the laity for help.

The Association of Lay Helpers for the Diocese of London was formed in the year 1865, and "readers" have been admitted in the chapel of London House with a form of service drawn up for the purpose in the form following :—

John, by Divine permission, Bishop of London, to our beloved and approved in Christ, A.B., Greeting: We do, by these presents, give unto you our Commission to act as Reader in the parish of C., within our Diocese and jurisdiction, on the nomination of the Rev. D. E., Rector [or Vicar] of the same, and do authorize you, subject to his approval, to read Prayers and to read and explain the Holy Scriptures in the School thereof, or in other rooms within the parish, and generally to render aid to the Incumbent in all ministrations which do not strictly require the service of a Minister in Holy Orders. And we further authorize you to render similar aid in other Parishes in our Diocese, at the written request, in each case, of the Incumbent. And we hereby declare that this our Com-

mission shall remain valid until it shall be revoked by us or our successors (whether *mero motu*, or at the written request of the said D. E.), or until a fresh admission to the said parish of C. shall have been made. And so we commend you to ALMIGHTY GOD, Whose blessing we humbly pray may rest upon you and your work. Given under our hand and seal, &c.

At present the Association consists of 44 lawyers and medical men, 141 clerks, 48 mechanics and labourers, and 156 ranged under the head of miscellaneous. They aim to strengthen the hands of laymen already at work by bringing them into closer relationship with the Bishop and with one another, and to call out more lay help by making known the kind of work in which the clergy want assistance. Recently the Association has been very active on the subject, and has held many meetings in all parts of the metropolis. At these meetings undoubtedly much good has been done; a distinguished layman has taken the chair; a paper carefully prepared has been read upon the subject, and then a discussion of more or less interest and value has ensued.

Great care is taken in the appointment of suitable agents. They must be communicants sanctioned by the Bishop; a register of the names and addresses of

the members is kept, showing what description of work each unemployed member may be willing to undertake, and also of the place and nature of the work in which each unemployed member is engaged. Upon the application of incumbents, members of the Association are put into communication with them, with a view to such arrangements for lay assistance in parochial work as may be mutually agreed upon. Once in every year the members attend Divine service and receive the Holy Communion together. Once, at least, in every year a meeting of the members is held under the presidency of the Bishop if possible, in order to consult together upon one or more of the various branches of work in which they are engaged, and to make such regulations as may be found necessary or expedient. I hear also of the formation of Parochial Associations of Lay Helpers which hold monthly or occasional meetings of a desirable character. The executive committee of the Association is appointed yearly by the Bishop.

The work to be done is various. At all the meetings which I have attended I have found the principal stress laid upon house-to-house visitation and mission-house services. It has been found that the poor have a reluctance to attend the church, but they

will attend a mission-house service, and to preach and pray at such place lay help is urgently required. Other subjects specified are teaching in Sunday-schools and getting children to attend, conducting Bible-classes, tract distribution, seeking out the unbaptized and unconfirmed, encouraging the newly confirmed to come to Holy Communion, and inducing the poor to attend church. Under the head of week-evening work such subjects are indicated as teaching in night and ragged schools, management of working-men's clubs and youths' institutes, assistance at popular lectures, penny readings, and other means of recreation, attendance at penny banks, clothing funds, and school and parochial libraries, visiting the poor, assisting in church services. Day work is much the same. Other subjects not already mentioned are superintending the distribution of relief, reading and speaking to working men on religious subjects in workshops; collecting and canvassing for funds for parochial and mission purposes, and acting as secretaries to parochial institutions and religious and charitable societies. Especial stress is laid upon the clergy being relieved of their secular duties as relieving officers. It is felt that clergy laden with an infinity of secular work, essential to the good of the parish and the carrying out of

their plans, are thus more or less incapacitated for the performance of the higher functions of their office. When we think what are the manifold duties of the clergy, it is no wonder that sermons made to represent original compositions, and which may be read as such, meet with a ready sale. Parochially London has grown wonderfully of late. The census of 1861, for instance, enumerates twenty-three parochial districts as formed out of the old parish of Kensington. Bishop Blomfield consecrated in all no less than 198 churches during the twenty-eight years of his episcopate, of which no less than 107 were in London.

Lay organization may be said to have commenced but recently. The first District Visiting Society of which I have heard, writes Mr. Bosanquet, was founded in connexion with St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, of which Daniel Wilson, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, was visitor. The Parochial Women Mission Fund was established in 1860. This association does not send its agents into any parish without a written application from the incumbent, who selects both the agent and her lady superintendent. There are now about 100 agents at work in London, acting chiefly in the capacity of Bible-women. For the young men connected with the Church there is a

Church of England Young Men's Society in Fleet Street, with fifteen branches in London and the suburbs; of 200 members on the books, more than half are engaged as teachers in Sunday-schools or other lay work. Then there is the Metropolitan Visiting and Relief Association, 21, Regent Street, formed in 1843, to distribute the contributions of charitable persons in such parts of the town as most need them, by means of the clergy and their district visitors. For that part of London which is in the diocese of Winchester there is the South London Visiting and Relief Association. How well laymen can work is understood in the neighbourhood of Drury Lane, where more than 500 of the lowest and the poorest in that district may be seen any Sunday afternoon at two Bible-classes conducted by laymen. Another lay agency in operation is the Workhouse Visiting Society.

In spite of all these organizations the Church of England as regards London has not yet fulfilled her mission. The harvest is plentiful, the labourers are few. Clergymen in the East say they would be glad of lay help from the West; but it does not come. In some parts of London there are parishes containing from 15,000 to 30,000 people, and in such a clergy-

man is almost unable to do his duty, in spite of his curates and paid lay agents. In most cases the number of visitors is quite insufficient. Mr. Bosanquet refers to a friend of his who had told him that some months after entering on a very poor cure in the south of London he had twenty-eight districts for visitors, but that twenty-seven were hopelessly vacant, and that the twenty-eighth was taken by his wife. This reminds me that some of the ladies of the clergy, especially in the East and poorer districts, labour as energetically as their husbands. I have heard of one lady who has two sewing-classes, with a hundred women in each. Commander Dawson, conference secretary of the Association of Lay Helpers, looks forward to the time when every communicant will be one of the agents of the society, thus stimulating his fellows, and giving fresh life and courage to his clergyman. It is clear when this consummation is achieved the Church of England, whether established or not, will shine with a saintly lustre which has never yet been hers.

Let me give a sketch of

AN EVANGELICAL PREACHER.

"You must go and hear the Church Spurgeon,"

said an intelligent lady, residing not a hundred miles from Highbury New Park, to the writer.

"Who is he?" we asked.

"The Rev. Gordon Calthrop," was the reply. "He preaches in a temporary iron church, St. Augustine's, Highbury New Park."

Soon afterwards, on a certain Sunday, we made our way to the church in question. There was very little difficulty in finding it out. As you enter Highbury New Park, leaving Dr. Edmond's new church on the right, you come into a region of broad roads and handsome villas, into which poverty, which has an unpleasant knack of pushing itself where it is not wanted, actually seems ashamed to intrude. In these houses, almost countryfied, standing in the midst of well-trimmed lawns, shaded by leafy shrubs, between which flowers of the richest beauty bud and blossom, only rich people and people apparently well-to-do dwell, and they all attend at Mr. Calthrop's church. Follow any of them, as on a Sunday morning the hour of service draws nigh, and bells far and near are calling men to prayer, and you find yourself at St. Augustine's. Close by, a handsome ecclesiastical structure is rapidly rising, which is to hold 1400 people. That is the permanent

church, the foundation-stone of which was laid by the Bishop of London, and where, it is hoped and believed, Mr. Calthrop may labour for many years to come. As it is, he has been preaching in this iron church, which will seat about nine hundred, for the last five years. He came there a stranger, fearful of the future, doubting what would be the issue. The church was quite a new one. The neighbourhood had been but recently built on, but he came with a heart full of zeal, with an experience ripe and varied, and in a little while it was apparent to himself and his friends that the step he had taken was fully justified by the result. Now he has a crowded church, more than 250 communicants, and a people ever ready to respond to his appeal, and rich in that charity without which a religious profession is but little better than sounding brass. The sacrament money at St. Augustine's, as they have no poor of their own, is distributed amongst those of neighbouring churches. One of the noticeable features in connexion with the place is the attendance of young men from the neighbouring College of St. John's. For the benefit of my readers let me add, that what was Highbury College is now a place of training for ministerial work in connexion with

the Church of England—of young men who have not had, owing to unavoidable circumstances, the benefit of a University education, but who nevertheless are the right stuff out of which to make useful preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. On Sundays they find employment as Sunday-school teachers in various parts of the metropolis; also on that day, with a view to future usefulness, they go to hear such eminent clergymen as may be preaching in the City or the West-end, but mostly they attend at St. Augustine's, and under Mr. Calthrop's preaching they prepare for the great work themselves.

Nor do I know that they could have a better model. Mr. Calthrop is not the Church of England Spurgeon. I am not aware that the Church of England has a Spurgeon. I know none of the other Christian churches of our day that have. It is only once in an age that a Mr. Spurgeon appears, but Mr. Calthrop has no need to fear comparison with Mr. Spurgeon or any one else. Personally, he is much smaller than the far-famed Baptist orator Mr. Spurgeon, and in figure and face very much resembles the late Douglas Jerrold. His voice is one of wonderful sweetness and power, and as he reads the Liturgy of his Church you feel that with him it is no empty form, to be re-

peated parrot-like and with railway speed, but the voice of a people humbled on account of sin, and standing trusting, yet trembling, in the presence of their God. Exquisitely can he render all its pathos, all its tenderness, all its sorrow, all its fulness of exultation, all its ecstasy of Christian hope. From the reading-desk to the pulpit the transition is easy and natural. At a distance there is something youthful in his look; but in his grey hair, in his face lined with thought, in his eye, which seems ever looking far off, as if here was not the boundary of his horizon, as if it had realized something of the glory which is to come; you see that already golden youth has past, and that you have before you one who has attained to the strength and steadiness, and ripeness and experience, of Christian manhood. He will not detain you long, nor will he weary you with learning, nor will he aim to dazzle the intellect and neglect the heart. In language of poetical simplicity will he unfold and illustrate his text, and force home on the hearts and consciences of all, its lessons. There is nothing of the pretension of the priest about him, nor does he delight in the terrors of the law. Evidently he is the servant of one whose yoke is easy, and whose burden is light; and such is his freshness

and originality, and such is his careful preparation for the pulpit, and such the naturalness of his delivery, that the more you hear him the more you like him. Much of his ministerial work is done at his own house, amongst the young people whom he collects there in his Bible-classes, which are largely attended. For this work he seems eminently fitted by a refinement of manner, not so much, I should fancy, the result of training, as of the natural instinct of a kindly heart. The North of London is favoured as regards clergymen, and Mr. Calthrop is a favourable specimen of his class. There are none around him more eloquent, more laborious, more successful. A recent American writer points to the chaplainships founded and supported in all the places of fashionable resort on the Continent as a proof of the amazing energy, and wealth, and power of the English Church. I would rather point to such churches as St. Augustine's, where a pastor is maintained in affluence, and a church crowded, and real good accomplished, without one farthing but what is raised by the free-will offerings of the people.

Outside his own immediate circle Mr. Calthrop has laboured with much effect. As a platform speaker he is very effective. As an out-of-door preacher he

at one time greatly distinguished himself. He was also one of the first to take his share in the work of preaching in theatres ; and one of the best accounts of one—a service at the Britannia, which was reprinted in almost all the religious journals at the time—was from his pen. A little while ago he had the honour of preaching in Westminster Abbey. He was before that one of the preachers in the special services at St. Paul's. Perhaps the greatest compliment in this respect paid him was the appointing him University preacher at his own university—that of Cambridge—a few years since. To have occupied that pulpit is a memorable event in any clergyman's life.

Little more need be said. Mr. Calthrop was born in London, and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. He at one time had thoughts of studying for the law, but ultimately the pulpit became the object of his choice. As a curate he originally laboured at Reading; he moved thence to Brighton, where he was curate to the late Rev. Mr. Elliott, author of a work still known in theological circles—the "Horæ Apocalypticæ." Six years of his ministerial life were spent at Cheltenham, and thence he removed with his wife and family to what was then a new and untried sphere of labour. The wealth and material prosperity

around him seem not to have impaired his devotedness. Very possibly they have opened to him fresh fields of usefulness; for if ever plain preaching was required for rich men, it is in the day in which we live. It is to the credit of Mr. Calthrop that he realizes this fact, and sees in the Gospel he proclaims a message for the richest of the rich as well as for the poorest of the poor.

A book might be written about Church Life. I can only say Dr. Temple tells us, that such commands as those in Leviticus as to tattooing, disfiguring the person, or wearing a blue fringe, should be sanctioned by divine authority, is utterly irreconcileable with our present feelings. The Bible is before all things the written voice of the congregation, writes Dr. Rowland Williams. The Pentateuch was not written by Moses. The Psalms do not bear witness to the Messiah. The prophecies are histories. Justification means peace of mind, or sense of the Divine approval. Regeneration is an awakening of the forces of the soul. Reason is the fulfilment of the love of God. The kingdom of God is the revelation of Divine Will in our thoughts and lives. The incarnation is purely

spiritual. In London pulpits the preacher best known and most identified with Broad Church theology is Professor Jowett, whose great theme is that eternal punishment is inconsistent with all that we can conceive of the requirements of justice or the character of God. Dean Stanley says no clergyman believes the Athanasian Creed, and treats many parts of the Bible as mythical. Of Father Ignatius and his eccentricities it is needless to speak.

The following statistics will interest many:—"There is a weekly celebration of the Holy Communion at 169 churches, more than one-fourth; daily celebration at 20, nearly one-thirtieth; early morning celebration at 159, one-fourth; evening celebration at 97, nearly one-sixth; afternoon celebration at 5; choral celebration at 63, one-tenth; saints'-day services at 198, nearly one-third; daily service at 132, more than one-fifth; no weekday service at 104, one-sixth; full choral service at 128, more than one-fifth; and partly choral service at 115, nearly one-fifth; giving a proportion of nearly half where the psalms are chanted; surpliced choirs at 137, more than one-fifth; paid choirs at 88, nearly one-seventh; voluntary choirs at 231, more than one-third. Gregorian tones are used exclusively for chanting at 46, one-four-

tecnth. The weekly offertory is the rule at 128, nearly one-fifth. There are free but appropriated seats at 141, nearly one-fourth; free and open seats at 65, more than one-tenth. The Eucharistic vestments are worn at 20, being one church in every 31; incense is used at 7, one-nineteenth; the surplice is worn in the pulpit at 83, more than one-eighth; and 26 churches are open daily for private prayer."

Dr. Sherlock, afterwards Bishop of Bangor, in his "Test Act Vindicated," published in the year 1718, tells us that in the year 1676, upon a calculation that was made, the Nonconformists of all sorts, including Papists as well as others, were found to be in proportion to the members of the Church of England as one to twenty. That this is not the case now shows how the Church of England has misused her opportunities, or else that her claims have been rejected by the nation at large.

CHAPTER VII.

AMONG THE PRESBYTERIANS.

At Colebrook Row.

INNOVATIONS are the order of the day. New times and altered circumstances require them. In Christian work they are imperatively required. While the Church has folded its arms and slept, while people have been lulled to ease and carelessness by the respectability of Church life and the wealth of professors, while pastors and ecclesiastical authorities have found satisfaction in the observance of ancient order and in the routine of established work, all at once there comes to them a cry that the heathen are outside of them, blaspheming the name they love, ignorant of the Gospel tidings, perishing in their sin and crime and misery at their very doors. John Wesley wrote how, in the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to him in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired that he would spend

some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come. In our time the curtain has been lifted up, and the devout and earnest Christianity of the day has stood face to face with the unbelief which, by ignoring the existence of a heavenly Father, and robbing humanity of its loftiest hopes and deepest consolations, left the masses in our crowded cities to live and die like brutes. The revelation has raised up in many quarters a feeling that something more has to be done than has yet been done, that the Church, to discharge its mission aright, needs a more earnest consecration of the heart, a less formal *modus operandi*, a freer utterance, a less stiff and starch and time-worn manifestation of Christian life.

In accordance with this feeling, one Sunday evening there was a novel service in the Presbyterian church, Colebrook Row, of which the Rev. J. Thain Davidson is pastor. The night itself was one of the most unfortunate that could have been selected for that or for any other experiment. London people have a great, and, let me add, a natural objection to wet weather. If it rains hard it offers them a good excuse for stopping at home. They do not like to spoil their Sunday clothes, and they have a great aversion to

bronchial affections. In this respect the Scotchman contrasts favourably with the Englishman. In such places as Edinburgh or Glasgow the churches are as well attended in bad weather as in fine. If it were so in London how many a pastor's heart would rejoice! At Colebrook Row they are Presbyterians, and in England we naturally presume Presbyterians to be Scotchmen—at any rate, this must be the case as regards the attendance at Colebrook Row. On Sunday evening the place was crammed. I did not see a seat anywhere to spare, nor did I see a hearer who did not seem to take the deepest interest in what was going on.

Well, and what was going on?—a thing I should think never seen in a Presbyterian place of worship before. It appears that the services in the Agricultural Hall just by have led to an increased demand for religious agency in that district. Hundreds who attend no place of worship have now been induced to do so. Hundreds who were careless about religion have now become concerned. Hundreds who a short while ago would have refused the gift of a tract, and would have shut their doors in the face of a Christian visitor, are now ready to receive the one and to listen to the *viva voce* instruction of the other. Naturally,

the appeal is made to Mr. Davidson, but his own duties in connexion with his church and congregation leave him no time to spare. A fund raised partly by Mr. Davidson's own people, and partly by the liberality of a private individual, has enabled the London City Mission to send an agent to labour in connexion with the services at the Agricultural Hall. But, after all, one man in such a multitude can do but little, and on Sunday evening Mr. Davidson, instead of preaching a sermon, organized, as it were, a public meeting,—yet not exactly a public meeting, for there was no chairman, there was no rhetorical fireworks, no murmurs of applause—the aim of which was to elicit Christian co-operation in evangelistic work in that particular locality. Belonging to their congregation there are some two hundred young men. How much can they do if they have but the willing heart!

The service commenced in the usual manner by the singing of a hymn. Mr. Davidson, who was in his pulpit and wore his gown, then offered up prayer, leading up to what was to be the peculiarity of that evening's service. He then delivered a short address, explanatory of the circumstances in which that meeting had been originated, and which had led to the visit of the deputation who were to address

them that night. It had seemed to their evangelistic committee that an opportunity had arisen in consequence of the services at the Agricultural Hall which required the utmost efforts of Christian workers. The object of that meeting was to excite to further effort. They were all too much inclined to be supine, to be content with mere religious routine. There was a need to break through spiritual monotony. They must endeavour to breathe new life and energy and freshness. There was a fine field before them, for London truly was, as it was often termed, the finest missionary field in the world; even amidst the lowest of the low there was an encouraging feeling existing. The masses felt that on the whole the Christians were their best friends—those most ready to do them good temporally as well as spiritually. Especially was it so in that particular district. The Church was much to blame in that it had not been more ready to take advantage of this feeling and to turn it to proper account. People had often been driven away from places of worship. As an illustration, Mr. Davidson said that in one of the churches in that locality a young man entered and took his seat one Sunday evening. Presently the lady to whom the pew belonged came in: she said to the

young man, harshly, "This is my pew, you have no business here." The young man took up his hat and walked out, resolving never to enter a place of worship again. In a week after, he was dead.

"In their various societies," continued Mr. Davidson, "there was ample room for all; some were more fitted for one kind of work than another, but they wanted workers of all kinds. There was a large amount of Christian talents amongst them lying waste, and they were losers, no one could say to how great an extent, through all eternity, in consequence. When there was a cry of anguish from earth, Christ came; and now can we refuse to utter the response, when there is a cry to the Church, 'Lord, here am I; send me?' Help is needed, nor can the work be done without human help." The reverend gentleman then called on Mr. Mathieson, the banker of Lombard Street, who stood up in the table pew, and, after a short prayer, proceeded to read a few verses from Matthew's Gospel, describing how the multitude were fed in the wilderness with seven loaves and a few small fishes. "In our time," said the speaker, "there was just such a multitude exclaiming, 'Who will show us any good?' and in the Scriptures we find rules for our guidance. We find our means of

usefulness in the inexhaustible love of our Saviour. No man could do any good who did not feel that. Christ said, 'I have compassion on the multitude.' What was compassion? Fellowship in suffering. And this is required from us. It was in this the greater part of Christ's suffering consisted. We may be ready to come to Christ, to have fellowship with Him at this table; but the question is, Are we equally anxious to have fellowship with Him in His suffering? It was the wonder-working power of love by which Christ fed the multitude. The practical question, How many loaves have ye? was one to be put to us. If our answer is, We have scarce enough for ourselves; we have very little over, we must use that. The manna that was not eaten at once became corrupt. We must realize the fact that when we took God's vows upon us we became as much consecrated to His service as any priest. Find out your gifts, learn not to be impatient of results, and make the most of the opportunity God has given you in so remarkable a manner to work in His service." Such was the substance of Mr. Mathieson's address. Another hymn was sung, and then Dr. A. P. Stuart, a medical man well known at the West-end, spoke briefly yet energetically on

the living Christ, and the constraining power of His death and resurrection as the most powerful and only stimulus to Christian zeal. The discourse was constructed on two passages in Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, in which he shows how the love of Christ was the motive power, and how necessity was laid on Him in consequence to preach the Gospel. "It was not alone," said the Doctor, "the living Christ, but it was the fact that He died for sin, that supplied the foundation of Christian effort. All we can do is far too little to show forth His praise. What is wanted is life in the soul—a dead soul can do nothing." The speaker then showed what a revival of religion had been produced by personal conversation after sermons, and concluded with an urgent appeal—an address of unusual earnestness. Then Mr. Davidson closed the service in the usual way. The experiment was a bold one, but none present could have regretted it. Why should not qualified laymen give addresses in our chapels and churches on special occasions—on a Sunday night? Is there a valid reason why they should not, or why ministers should not thankfully accept their aid?

PARK CHURCH, HIGHBURY.

At the back of substantial and well-to-do Highbury Place, bounded by the New River and the North London Railway, has sprung up of late years a flourishing settlement of villas, single and semi-detached, known as Highbury New Park. At one end of it there has been erected, at a cost of somewhere about eleven thousand pounds, a very handsome place of worship of white brick, ornamented with a very handsome spire. From an inscription in front of it I learn that it is a United Presbyterian Church, and that the pastor is the Rev. John Edmond, D.D. The Doctor came from the north to London some few years ago to preach to a congregation of Scotch men and women, meeting in Myddelton Hall, Islington, whence they had to move, as the church increased in success and influence and Christian zeal and power. Boswell, when introduced for the first time to old Sam Johnson, admitted that he was a Scotchman, but added, humbly and by way of apology, that indeed he could not help it. "Sir," replied the Doctor, "that's what many of your countrymen cannot help;" and, the writer would add, a good thing too, when we see what Dr. Edmond is,

and how he and his church labour to spread Christian truth around.

Inside you are struck with the comfort and cheerful appearance of the building. In form it is almost a square, and is remarkably light and airy. The pews are all open and well cushioned. The pulpit is a handsome platform. Underneath is the choir. The chapel is computed to seat comfortably 1200, but that estimate is rather under than over the mark. Underneath the chapel are rooms fitted up with every convenience for week-evening lectures, for meetings of young men's mutual improvement societies, for ladies' working parties, and the other organizations of an active and flourishing church. I find here about 2000*l.* is annually raised for religious purposes. The pastor has a salary of 700*l.* a year. Attached to the place is a Young Men's Literary Institute, a Young Men's Christian Fellowship Association, a Missionary Association, a Psalmody Association, a Ladies' Working Association. In Highbury New Park there are no poor people, and, consequently, there is no missionary agency or Sunday-school in connexion with that district; but the church, consisting of between four and five hundred members, is not idle nor neglectful of its special privilege and

duty. In the neighbouring Hoxton there are many poor untaught, and for their souls the church in Highbury cares. There a City missionary is employed, whose labours are not in vain. They have organized a Mothers' Meeting, a Bible Class, Penny Weekly Readings and Musical Entertainments, a Singing Class, and a Band of Hope. Last year their missionary conducted 156 in-door and 21 out-of-door meetings, 2100 district visitations for Scripture reading, &c., 500 district visitations to the sick and dying, besides the distribution of a large number of religious tracts. In Harvey Street, Hoxton, the church maintains a Sunday-school with an average attendance of 160, a day-school not so numerous, a Sick Relief Society, and in Albert Square another Sunday-school and a domestic servant class. Dr. Edmond himself preaches twice on the Sunday, and once on a week-night. He has a special service for servants on Sunday afternoons; on Fridays and Saturdays he also holds Bible classes. On Sundays the service itself is conducted very simply, much as it was in old-fashioned Dissenting chapels before the introduction of chants and anthems. To the stranger the principal novelty is the vast preponderance of young men in the congregation, and the use of that somewhat

inelegant version of the Psalms compared with which, in Scotch—not English ears,

"Italian thrills are tame."

And now what further shall the writer say of Dr. Edmond? Personally he does not come up to the English idea of a successor of one of the old grand Presbyterians who died gladly for God and His covenant in troubled times, and to whom, humanly speaking, as Mr. Froude has well shown, England owes the civil and religious liberty she enjoys. Even with his gown on he does not strike you as being a big man. His features are small, and when he is reading or looking down his very dark eyebrows completely shadow and eclipse his eyes. For his age he is very bald, but his face is apparently that of a man of hardy constitution and active out-door life. His voice is excellent, and every syllable he says can be distinctly heard. He preaches apparently from notes, and as he goes on his way rejoicing the fire burns; he leaves his desk, now retreating behind, now walking a few steps on one side, and a smile lights up his face as he talks of what the Gospel has done, and of the brighter triumphs it has yet to achieve. At other times he comes forward, reaching his right arm

as far as he can over the desk, as if anxious to individualize his appeal, and to force it home to every heart. As a preacher he hammers at his text with true Scotch pertinacity, and will not give it up till in the way of spiritual truth he has wrung from it all it can be made to yield. There can be no question about his orthodoxy, or his knowledge of Scripture, or of the firm foundations of his faith, or of the ample preparation he makes for his Sunday services. No hearer need go empty away from Park Church. It must be his own fault exclusively if he does. The preacher understands his vocation, and to it conscientiously devotes his every power.

The English have never taken kindly to Presbyterianism; the simplicity of its worship, the sternness of its Calvinistic creed—that of the Westminster Assembly of Divines—have repelled our English sympathies. Of late it has put forth, and is still putting forth, growing strength. There are about twenty Presbyterian churches in London, only two of them —Dr. Cumming's being the principal—being connected with the State Church of Scotland.

The Presbyterians are moving with the stream; they are beginning to substitute "human hymns," as they are called, for the Psalms of David. In one

London chapel, at least, the organ has been introduced. In some quarters doubts have been entertained as to the divine right of Presbytery. There is amongst them a growing feeling of the impossibility of spending the whole time of the Sabbath in "the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is taken up in works of necessity and mercy." It is to be questioned whether the Catechism definition of the duties of the State in relation to the Church is maintained by London Presbyterians. "The civil-magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church; that the truth of God be kept pure and entire; that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God." The Calvinism of the moderns is not the Calvinism of the Westminster Assembly, and yet every clergyman at his ordination declares that "he sincerely owns and believes the whole doctrine contained in

the Confession of Faith to be founded upon the Word of God; acknowledges it as the Confession of his Faith; that he will firmly and constantly adhere to it; and that he disowns all doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever contrary to and inconsistent with the Confession." Holy Willie's prayer—

> "O Thou wha in the heavens dost dwell,
> Wha, as it pleases best thysel',
> Sends ane to heaven and ten to hell,
> A' for Thy glory,
> And no for onie guid or ill
> They've done afore Thee"—

whatever it was in Burns's time, is a caricature of Presbyterianism as it exists in London in our day.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONGREGATIONALISTS AND BAPTISTS.

EARLY in our religious history two theories as to Church and State were developed. If the Presbyterians had gained the day in that time of religious ferment—which had so melancholy a termination in the restoration of Charles II., with his puppy-dogs and mistresses—we should have seen the Church established independent of the State: the latter acting as its servant, exercising the sword at its bidding and on its behalf. The Churchmen of that day adopted a lower theory, as appears by their favourite formulas — "the power of the magistrate in ecclesiastical matters," and "passive obedience without limitations." In his zeal in this direction, Archbishop Sancroft actually went so far as to alter the rubric. If Bishop Cosin may be believed (the story is told by Calamy), where it was said nothing was to be read in the churches but by the Bishop's order, Sancroft took on himself to add,

"or the King's order." In short, the theory was then what Sir J. D. Coleridge only the other day stated it, that "the Church was a political institution." Against this theory, as dishonouring to God and degrading to religion, the Puritans sternly protested, and at the peril of their lives. Naturally they fell back upon such texts as, "My kingdom is not of this world," "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's." More and more it became clear to them that the Church was simply an assembly of believers; that Christ's kingdom was exclusively a spiritual one; that the greatest service the State could do to religion was to leave it alone. They argued, and not without some show of plausibility, that the faith enunciated by the carpenter's son, disseminated through the world by tent-makers and fishermen; the faith which had found its way into the hearts of the stubborn Jews; which had been more than a match for the pride of Rome or philosophy of Greece —for which the multitude, the grey-haired sire, the high-spirited lad with life with its golden prospects opening all round him, the tender and delicate maiden, had gone smilingly to die—the faith immortal with the immortality of truth, required not the vulgar

patronage of worldly men, or that the State should attempt bribery on its behalf. Of course they were wrong; for only last session of Parliament the present Archbishop of Canterbury, in his place in the House of Lords, on the night of an important debate, denominated a religion thus supported as a spurious one; and it was only within the memory of living men that Nonconformists were permitted to be parish constables or town councillors. Nevertheless, half the worshippers of England and Wales are Dissenters—that is to say, are of this spurious religion, and pay their own ministers, and build their own chapels, without asking a farthing from the State. Their leading denominations are the Baptists and Congregationalists; and it shows how terribly Dissent undervalues the historical element when I state that the Independents now prefer to call themselves Congregationalists. There is an historical halo around Independency. Mr. Brodie remarks that "the grand principle by which the Independents surpassed all other sects was, universal toleration to all denominations of Christians whose religion was not conceived to be hostile to the peace of the State—a principle to which they were faithful in the height of power as well as under persecution." Nor should it

be forgotten that Locke, the first of our philosophers to argue on behalf of toleration, gained, as his biographers confess, his enlightened views from the Independent Divines.

Speaking relatively, Dissent is a thing of yesterday. It was born of the Puritanism which filled the gaols and fed the fires of Smithfield, when there were men and women ready to die for Christ and his Cross. Wycliffe was one of our earliest Dissenters. What he taught was the study of the Bible as the source of religious faith and the rule of a religious life. At college he was known as the Gospel doctor.

Queen Elizabeth ever believed in the invocation of saints; the worship of the Virgin Mary; thought it sinful for priests to marry, and had a couple of lighted candlesticks on her altar; but the country was full of learned divines, who had come from Geneva or Frankfort with a contempt for such papistical ideas, and with a more keen appreciation of the spiritual character of true religion. About twenty years after her accession, the principles of Independency were openly taught by Robert Brown, a relative of Cecil, the Lord Treasurer. When Black Bartholomew came, Puritans and Presbyterians were alike driven out of the Church. Owen, Vice-Chancellor of the

University of Oxford, Baxter and Calamy, might have been Bishops, but they held that they could not assent to the teaching and ritualism of the Church, and be false to conscience and to God. For this they had to endure hardships, poverty, imprisonment, of all kinds—when Charles II., who obtained the Crown of England under false pretences, though he did, as Pepys tells us, take the Sacrament on his knees, received from his pliant Bishops his title of most religious King. Calamy, when a lad, wondered why the old ministers who led peaceable lives, and always prayed for the King, were persecuted, and in our day the feeling of wonder still exists.

There have been times when the religious life of England has been utterly divorced from the Church. Such were the times when George II. said all the Bishops were infidels; such were the times when the clergy read to their congregations the Book of Sports, enforcing on their hearers dancing, jumping, archery, Whitsun ales, May-poles, and Morrice dances on a Sunday; such were the times when the Methodists were expelled Oxford, and when old John Newton wrote, that besides himself, there were only two pious clergymen in London. It is impossible to overrate the obligations of this country to Dissent. It saved

England from Popery. It laid the foundation of the mightiest republic the world has yet seen. It crushed the despotism of the Stuarts, while the Church was indecently declaring that a royal proclamation had the force of law. It gave us civil and religious liberty; the wonderful change for the better which within the last thirty years has come over the Church life of this country is due to the fact that, rivalling the Establishment in zeal and good works, has been an ever-growing, intelligent, and educated Dissent.

What are the doctrines of orthodox Dissenters? I reply, as regards Baptists and Congregationalists, they are very much the same. The real question at issue, whether adults or infants are the proper subjects of baptism, and whether the rite should be administered by baptism or immersion, really being but of little more importance than that of the Big Endians and the Little Endians of Gulliver. The Congregational Union issue a statement called "The Principles of Religion," which they publish, not as a bond of union or as a series of articles to be subscribed to, but as a summary of what is commonly believed amongst them. In this document they state they believe the Scriptures of the Old Testament as received by the Jews, and the books of the New Testament as received

by the Primitive Christians from the Evangelists and Apostles, to be divinely inspired and of divine authority; they believe in one God as revealed in the Scriptures as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; in the fall of man; in the existence in man of "a fatal inclination to moral evil utterly incurable by human means;" in God, before the foundation of the world, designing the manifestation of his Son in the flesh for our salvation, to attain eternal salvation for us. They believe that the Holy Spirit is given to quicken and renew the soul of man; that all who will be saved were the objects of God's electing and eternal love; in the perseverance of the Saints; in the perpetual obligation of baptism and the Lord's Supper; in the coming of Christ to judge all flesh; that the righteous will receive life everlasting, and that the portion of the wicked will be everlasting punishment. As I have stated, such is a rough outline of the common belief in Congregational and Baptist Chapels. It is to be questioned, however, whether it would receive the unanimous assent and consent of Baptist and Congregational ministers.

As regards Church order and discipline, I may attempt the following summary, which I believe is as true of Baptist as of Congregational Churches.

A Church, according to them, is a society of believers meeting voluntarily together to observe religious ordinances; to promote mutual edification and holiness; to perpetuate and promulgate the Gospel in the world; and to advance the glory and worship of God through Jesus Christ. The New Testament exclusively is their authority for Church customs, and Christ is their only head; they elect their own officers, whether bishops or pastors, and deacons. They believe that no person should be received as members of Christian Churches but such as make a credible profession of Christianity; are living according to its precepts, and attest a willingness to be subject to its discipline. They believe that the power of a Christian is purely spiritual, and should in no way be corrupted by union with temporal or spiritual power.

In London there are 220 Congregational churches and 210 Baptist; some of the latter being very small, and the ministers illiterate and narrow-minded more than is usually the case. The Congregationalists are chiefly incorporated in a body known as the Congregational Union, which meets twice a year to deliberate; once in London, and once in such provincial city or town as shall previously have been resolved on.

In London the Congregationalists have two or three Colleges for educating young men for the work of the Ministry—the principal one being the New College, St. John's Wood. This College is in connexion with the London University, where some of the students graduate. The Baptists also have a fine College in the Regent's Park, the students of which also occasionally are in the class lists of the London University. But the real fact is that in all the Dissenting Colleges the men who take university honours are the exception, not the rule; the reason is the course extends over but four or five years—and so much of that time is devoted to theological study and pulpit preparation that there is not the time to attain to the high standard prescribed by the London University. The student has often had but an average middle-class education. He feels an impulse, or, as it is technically termed, "a call" to the Ministry. He has been found acceptable as a Sunday School teacher, or in other ways has demonstrated his ability and religious character and zeal. With the sanction of his Minister and the Church with which he is connected, he is sent to College, where he remains till his professional education is complete. Occasionally young men seek to enter the Ministry

with very humble views. Recently I heard of such a one. His pastor having indicated his doubt as to the possession of the requisite ability, the reply was: "Oh, sir, I know I never could be a learned man like you, but I thought I might make a hignorant Minister like Mr. ——," naming a well-known and popular Minister of another denomination.

The Baptists have also their Baptist Union sitting in London, and occasionally in the Provinces. The first General (Arminian) Baptist Church is said to have been formed in London in 1607. The first Particular (Calvinistic) Church in 1616. I fancy that in some of the Baptist Bethels and Cave Adullams, an Antinomian, or, at any rate, a more decided Calvinism exists than prevails in the Independent Churches. As regards Church government, their ideas are the same. One necessity of this state of things is that their ministers must have some preaching ability, a thing which is quite an accident in the Church of England; another advantage is, that there are few pecuniary attractions to tempt men to undertake duties for which they are unqualified.

The leading bodies connected with Church work in London are as follows:—1. The Congregational

Chapel Building Society, of which the twentieth anniversary was held last year. We gather from the facts laid before the meeting that during the 21 years (including 1869) of the Society's existence it has materially assisted in the erection or purchase of 87 chapels—representing a contribution from it in grants and free loans of 110,000*l.* towards an aggregate outlay of 360,000*l.*, and providing (exclusive of intended galleries) nearly 80,000 sittings for adults. Dividing the 21 years of the Society's history into three periods of seven years each, in the first period its list comprises 17 chapels, in the second 26, and in the third 44. The Society is at present engaged, with Mr. S. Morley, M.P., in the erection of 24 chapels, to each of which Mr. Morley contributes 500*l.*, and the Society 500*l.*, half of the last being free loans. The success of the Society is largely owing to its loan fund, now amounting to 11,006*l.* 19s., from which loans are made free of interest to committees engaged in the erection of chapels. This fund remains intact, and will be carefully preserved for the object. The grant fund is, however, just now nearly exhausted, while the liabilities of the Society on this account reach 2000*l.* Among other particulars, it may be stated that the Society has been instrumental in saving from ex-

tinction the two metropolitan chapels of George Whitefield—Tottenham Court Road Chapel, and the Tabernacle, Moorfields. Indeed, with the exception of Spa Fields Chapel, the Countess of Huntingdon's followers may be said to be absorbed in the Congregational body.

The London Congregational Association has four District Missions. It has aided in planting and sustaining eight Churches and Missions in four districts. They ask 1000*l.* a year, with which, aided by local support, they undertake to plant ten new district Missions in spiritually destitute localities, and sustain them until they are enabled to support themselves. As an illustration of what may be done in this way I give the following account of the District Mission established by the Church and Congregation under the care of the Rev. Dr. Raleigh, of Hare Court Chapel, Canonbury, as drawn up by the Rev. J. H. Wilson, of the Home Missionary Society.

The parent Church selected necessitous districts, in which they have opened schools and mission-rooms; in these a number of the congregation begin to labour as teachers, visitors, evangelists, &c. The result is the early formation of a branch Church, where the poor people secure all the privileges of

Christian fellowship, and the fine feeling of a Church-home, a place which they call "our Chapel," and where they look up to some one whom they call "our pastor," and soon those so gathered together become co-workers with the parent Church in extending its influence in the locality—rising out of these movements, the Church at Hare Court Chapel have now five branch Churches. From the last report (1868) it appears that there are now three rooms for religious service for the young, and several others for meetings with the poor and ignorant; three day schools, and five Sunday or ragged schools; two large week evening schools, and several smaller ones; seven mothers' meetings; a district nursery for children and infants, whose mothers require to leave them during the day; coal clubs; home for little boys, where thirty are fed and clothed; three paid ministers; six lay evangelists or pastors; two Bible-women; six paid teachers, and seven paid monitors for day schools; and to aid them, there are from 300 to 400 members of the Church and congregation earnestly engaged as evangelists, pastors, teachers, helps, visitors, Scripture readers, &c. During the year about 120 had joined the Church. The Sunday and ragged schools are attended by 1300 children; the day schools

by 900, and the evening schools by upwards of 400. Besides, there are temperance societies and Bands of Hope, and in the summer months out-door services.

Another society worked by the Congregationalists is the Christian Instruction Society, founded in the year 1825, to aid in evangelizing London. House-to-house visitation was from the beginning and still is its main characteristic. Its other agencies are lay-preaching in and out of doors; the Sunday afternoon opening of places of worship; lectures on prevailing immorality and vice, and united quarterly prayer meetings. This society, however, is by no means sectarian. At its united quarterly prayer meetings ministers of the Baptist, Presbyterian, and Independent denominations join.

THE SEVENTH-DAY BAPTISTS.

As you go down Leman Street, Whitechapel, on your left, nearly at the bottom, stand two public-houses—one the Shamrock, the other, if I mistake not, the Brown Bear. Between them is a narrow little passage; on the right is a Gospel Hall, facing you is a plain brick-built Meeting-house, with a door which at certain times opens in vain, and with a window which is covered with wire of a very suggestive character. Above the window is an inscription, stating that it

was rebuilt in 1790, but that it was founded more than a century before that. A side door leads you into a grass-grown and quiet enclosure. There are a few gravestones there, recording, in illegible characters, the piety and virtues of those who have gone before. At the back of the Meeting-house is the minister's residence. In the same square resides the pew-opener, with her little family, who seem fresher and livelier than you would expect in such a place. Outside rush along the Fenchurch Street trains to and fro, sometimes with a scream which, as you will by-and-by find, will drown the preacher's voice. Outside there are factories and warehouses darkening the air; outside there are heathens—baptized I dare-say, but nevertheless heathens—as complete and entire as any discovered by Captain Cook; outside go up and down all day the sailors of every country under heaven, at all times when on shore a disorderly lot, with a strong tendency to get drunk and quarrel; outside are the lodging-house keepers, and Jew slop-sellers, and foul women and crimps, who lie in wait for poor Jack; outside, nightly and daily, on Sundays and week-days, once a week and all the year round, is the ever-deafening and ever-growing roar of London life.

On Saturdays this little old-fashioned meeting-house is opened twice a day. Of sects, as we all know, there are many Lilliputian varieties. One of the smallest of these is that of the Seventh-day Baptists. In this country there are two congregations of them; one in Mill Yard, and one far away in Gloucestershire, where, according to the common proverb, "God is." At one time they were a sect, as they are I believe at this time in America. Here, in England, they have dwindled down to two skeleton congregations, an endowment, and a Chancery suit. As there is money a form of worship is kept up, though for all practical purposes the cause is dead. There may be four grown-up persons besides the pew-opener to form the morning service: there are just as many in the afternoon. There is no week-evening service. At one time, many, many years ago, there was a Sunday-school, but the scholars have grown up and moved away, and none have come to take their vacant places. Inside the door you are informed there are no pew-rents, no collections. Nevertheless, the people keep away. In the pulpit is a learned man of an old-fashioned and almost extinct type, and no one regards him; and yet I must confess there was to me a fascination in the place. It was the ghost of what I knew in

youth. Long, long ago, there were just such old-fashioned meetings, with just such sounding-boards over the pulpit, just such plain and high pews, just such learned divines, just as deficient in all practical appeal. Up in the window before me buzzed the very same bluebottle fly, only a little more elderly and less active in consequence, which, in younger and happier days, distracted the writer's attention, and interfered sadly with what would have been otherwise a profitable opportunity. There are no meeting-houses now. If you want to see one as they were, in all their original nakedness and want of grace, go to Mill Yard, Whitechapel. We, of course, have wonderfully improved, and yet I have a tenderness for the old meeting-house. How learned were their ministers, how awful and orthodox their deacons! With what fear did I eye the man who gave out the hymn, and with what greater fear the watchful individual who poked up with his long stick inattentive or sleepy boys!

But I return to Mill Yard. The Christian Church in our day has pretty well agreed to get rid of or, at any rate, ignore what is read in the Bible about the seventh day being "the Sabbath of the Lord your God." At one time this was not so. Now the tide

has receded and left the Seventh-day Baptists stranded on the mud. In doing so, the Church, of course, has increased the difficulty some feel about the Divine origin and perpetual obligation of the Christian Sabbath. Archbishop Whately, for instance, could reason with the Christian who had exchanged, in spite of the literal command of God, the Christian for the Jewish Sabbath, but his arguments would fail to touch the Seventh-day Baptist, who would contend that he was doing that which God had commanded. But the fear of this has not led Christians to abandon what, in the opinion of most of them, is the apostolic plan of meeting on the first day of the week. It is to be hoped the fund left for the benefit of the Seventh-day Baptists is not a large one. The mouldy appearance of Mill Yard Meeting-house indicates that it is not. But it is enough to retain at his post a gentleman who, perhaps, would be more profitably engaged elsewhere. Certainly it does seem like a waste of power to have a chapel and a service lasting nearly a couple of hours for one grown-up adult male and three adult females, excluding the chapel pew-opener. I must say, with the exception of a young gentleman in knickerbockers, who was so astonished at the apparition of a real stranger that he kept staring at

me all the time of singing, all seemed to do their duty. The singing—and there was plenty of it—was really and truly Congregational. Five or six parts of the Bible were read, and the congregation followed with open Bibles. The preacher laboured at his discourse, and quoted Hebrew and Latin as if we had all been learned divinity students. Nor could he have prayed with more fulness and power had the benches been filled with living souls waiting to draw near to the Father of spirits and live. One could not but respect the preacher, however useless seemed his learning and misdirected his research. Yet I would be sorry to stand in his shoes. He had hearers once —Where are they? Dead, or moved away, is the reply. He says in 1840 he began "to officiate as afternoon preacher in the ancient Sabbath-keeping congregation in Mill Yard." He talks of "nearly sixty years of close critical, philological, and exegetical study of the sacred Scriptures;" of "more than thirty years of constant and laborious exposition of them;" of his having fully, freely, fearlessly, and repeatedly discoursed upon every part of natural and revealed religion. In spite of his age, physically he is not unequal to his work. He has a good voice, yet practically he beats the air. There are few to

listen to his words and respond to his appeal. I wonder—as in his quiet study he reads the ancient versions of the Bible and laboriously constructs his argument—whether it ever occurs to him that there is something better and grander than seventh-day baptism, or systematic theology, and that is every-day Christianity. I wonder, too, while looking on the dead graves and the long grass, whether it occurs to him that in that region of all unclean and deadly sin it especially behoves the preacher, in preference to ingenious speculation or antiquarian research, to impress on the heart and consciences of men the yearning, living love of God. It is not in the calm retreat, the silent shade, that vice and irreligion can be confronted and changed into purity and piety. One would fancy at Mill Yard the contrary opinion was held, as the preacher goes on, expounding the Proverbs or the Book of Job to empty benches, while close by the harlot plies her unhallowed calling, the publican retails his vitriol gin, and mothers, with eyes artificially black, knock about their little ones or cover them with kisses, as they themselves are alcoholically stimulated into maudlin tenderness or demoniac rage! If you want to see what an endowment can do for religion, go to Mill Yard. No doubt those

who left money for the place thought they were doing God service. In reality, an endowment can but preserve a corpse which had better be put away. We bury our dead out of our sight. As it is in the material world so it is in the spiritual world. We love to look on life; we shrink with abhorrence from the sight of death, when Time's decaying fingers have dimmed the lustre of eyes once bright as stars, and plucked from beauty's cheek the blushing rose.

A more curious spot in all London is not than Mill Yard Meeting-house. The day I was there, after a service of nearly two hours, it was established by the learned minister, who is an F.S.A., and calls himself elder of the congregation (he must often stand a good chance of being junior as well), that the title of the Book of Proverbs was only to be applied to the first part, that it consisted of divers distinct sections, and that generally the book was found in the Bible after the Psalms. Evidently the preacher is a learned, painstaking student of the Dryasdust school—full of crotchets; but the biggest crotchet of all is that he should go on preaching year after year in Mill Yard.

Mr. Spurgeon's works and essays are so constantly before the public that the briefest notice of them is

all that is necessary here. In his great Tabernacle near the Elephant and Castle, which is one of the sights of London, he has a church alone consisting of 4700 members, and such is the orderly arrangement that, as he said, if one of his members were to get tipsy he should know of it before the week was out —a statement perhaps true in reality if not literally. Enormous as his place of worship is, it is always filled; but it represents, not so much a Christian Church as a Christian community on a gigantic scale. In his Orphanage at Stockwell some 135 boys are boarded, clothed, and taught. Then at Newington he has established an Orphanage and School, and under his great Tabernacle is a Pastors' College, which in a couple of years takes the raw student from the shop or the counting-house and sends him forth into the world a ready-made divine, occasionally not a little to the dismay of those who consider a good training and a careful preparation great helps to ministerial usefulness. The students are lodged in families around, and on the Sunday are principally employed in preaching in various districts near London. Some of the Baptist places are very small indeed, and very badly attended. It were better, one would think, that they were shut up and merged

with other churches or denominations. There is something inexpressibly melancholy in the long lists of Zions, and Bethels, and Mount Sions, where the pastor and the people scarcely live. Amongst some of the Baptists there are some of Antinomian tendencies, and the preachers of such doctrines have very large congregations. They are the elect of God, and can never sin. As to their doctrine and its results, one illustration will suffice. A member of one of the largest of these Antinomian places unfortunately got tipsy, fell out of the cart in which he was riding, and broke his leg. "Ah!" said his sympathizing pastor when he heard of it, "what a blessed thing he can't fall out of the covenant." The Antinomian believes that Christ paid, with his death, the price of the pardon of a certain number. These are in the covenant, and out of that covenant they cannot fall. There are in the Church of England those who preach this doctrine, but their number is rare. Up in Notting Hill is a Tabernacle built up and carried on by Mr. Varley, an humble imitator of Mr. Spurgeon. Originally Mr. Varley was a butcher, but he took to preaching; and finding that people came to hear him, and that he did them good, he now devotes himself entirely to ministerial work. At his Tabernacle, in St.

James's Square, there is accommodation for 1200 hearers, and for the education of more than 500 children. This history of these Tabernacles shows what may be done when suitable agency is employed. Mr. Spurgeon's subscriptions are really wonderful. Twenty thousand pounds were given him by one lady for the purpose of founding his orphanage. More than once 2000*l.* have been dropped into his letter-box, as he told the writer of an article in the *Daily Telegraph*, where, ludicrously enough, he appeared under the head of "Unorthodox London." "When recently attacked by illness, he began to despair; but that same evening a lady left 100*l.* at his door, and 1000*l.* came in immediately afterwards."

CHRISTMAS MORNING WITH THE YOUNGSTERS.

Amongst the most unpleasant recollections of an otherwise not unpleasant childhood are those connected with attendance at chapel on the evenings of Christmas Days. On such occasions there were circumstances, needless to explain, and in which the reader would take no interest were they explained, which compelled the writer to leave the pleasant fire and the games and mirth of the season, and, putting

on his coat, trudge manfully in the dark and through the snow to shiver for an hour and a half at least at meeting. Other people the writer well knew were enjoying themselves. Father Christmas was not the rage then that he is now; Christmas-trees were a later invention, and so were Christmas tales; but still even in those far-away and benighted times there were cakes and ale, and homely Christmas carols and a little fun on a Christmas night, when blind-man's-buff was in fashion, and snapdragon was to the little ones a wonder and a joy. The writer felt, as he sat in the comfortless square box of green baize and deal, and surveyed the scattered congregation, how much more agreeable it would have been had the old meeting been shut up on such a night, had the old minister saved his sermon, had the old ladies and gentlemen who formed the congregation dozed comfortably in their old arm-chairs at home. He arrived at the conclusion then which he has ever since retained—a conclusion the correctness of which no subsequent consideration has induced him to modify—that services at church or chapel on Christmas nights are an immense mistake. Christmas morning special services, however, are quite a different thing, and especially where children are concerned. They at any rate

realize Christmas more fully than their elders, and assuredly it is by them the religious aspect of the day may be most vividly felt.

This is not a question for argument. More than forty years ago the late Dr. Fletcher, of Finsbury Chapel, instituted a special morning service at his own place of worship for Sunday-school children from the Sunday-schools of the district. The avowed object of that service was the benefit of the young. In time past it has been found to have had a salutary effect. It has been continued by Dr. Fletcher's successor, the Rev. A. M'Auslane, a minister whose manner, and personal appearance, and mode of speaking qualify him especially for so delicate and difficult a task. Mr. M'Auslane hails from the land where Christmas is unknown. He was a student under Dr. Wardlaw at Glasgow. He commenced his pastoral duties in Dunfermline, but he has travelled south, and at Newport, in Wales, where he stayed a short while, and latterly at Finsbury Chapel, where he has now been eight years, he has caught something of the English regard for Christmas Day, and preaches accordingly. I scarce think London has a prettier sight to show than that of Finsbury Chapel on a Christmas morning. It is full in every part.

On the ground floor and the first gallery are ranged the children and their teachers, and up above there is another gallery full of adult spectators. As they sing some of the finest of our hymns, such as—

"Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,"

the swell of their young voices is beautiful to hear. Their faces, full of joy, were equally beautiful to see. To be preached to by a learned man in a gown in a big chapel is something indeed for a little ragged urchin to think of. Then what pains must have been taken to master the tunes and sing them so well. Nor is this all by which the event of the year—as it must be for some of them—is characterized. At some of the schools the children, I believe, have a breakfast given them by the teachers previous to starting. At all of them there is a distribution of something satisfactory in the shape of buns. The muster is considerable. The schools represented at the service I attended, in addition to that belonging to the place, were Mile End, King Edward Street, Wood Street, Spitalfields, Willow Walk, Ark Street, Paradise Street, the Weigh House, the New Tabernacle, Bell Alley; Red Lion Street, Clerkenwell;

Andrew Street Ragged-schools, Union Walk, Jewin Street, James Street, City Road, Ropemakers Street. The service commenced with singing—

"Another year has passed away,
Time swiftly glides along,
We come again to praise and pray,
And sing our festive song;
We come with song to greet you,
We come with song again."

The Rev. W. Tyler then read a part of the fifth chapter of Matthew, and offered up an appropriate prayer, in which a special reference was made to the evangelistic work carried on in the City. Another hymn was sung, and then came the sermon, the subject of which was Christ blessing children, and the text of which was in Mark x. 14 and 16. Mr. M'Auslane described how a painter had portrayed the scene; not having the picture there to show them, he would attempt a description of it in words. Some might have thought Jesus too busy or children too insignificant. In reality it was not so, and he believed that if Jesus came in this year into London, He would act now as He did then. Sometimes people forget—the butler forgot Joseph. Jesus Christ never changes. The preacher endeavoured to bring out what the text teaches about Jesus and children:—1. It taught that

Jesus is attractive to children. Some men and women children don't like at all; others they go to cheerfully and willingly. Jesus Christ draws them to Him just as the sun the flowers. He is spoken of as the Sun of Righteousness. Why is a child not afraid to walk through the valley of the shadow of death? It is because he sees Jesus, and when he has passed through on the other side there is Jesus, the most attractive in all that land. 2. The text taught that Christ takes a deep interest in children. It was clear the Apostles did not, or they would not have tried to prevent them from coming forward. He takes the same interest now. It was to Him children had to be grateful for bodies and souls, for kind friends, and the comforts of life. All power is given to Him in heaven and on earth. Salvation is the gift of Christ, and that is another proof of the interest He takes in children. If any boy there had no father or mother, sister or brother, or friend, if he stood in this cold world alone, let him take this thought with him—in the morning as he rose from his humble cot, in the evening as he retired to rest—Jesus cares for me. Here the preacher paused while the children refreshed themselves by singing "The Pilgrims," the boys asking, the girls

replying, and all joining in the chorus, the last verse of which is—

"Come, oh, come! and do not leave us;
Christ is waiting to receive us,
Christ is waiting to receive us,
In that bright, that better land."

Mr. M'Auslane resumed. The text taught (3), Jesus prays for children. It is true we have not the prayer, but, nevertheless, he believed that Jesus prayed. The account in Matthew implies that He did. His prayer would, in all probability, be that God would be the protector of these children, and guide them all through life to the heavenly, happy land. There was a young man once condemned to die. His brother, who had lost an arm in the service of his country, went and pleaded for him. The judges were overcome, not by his eloquence, but by the sight of the stump of the amputated arm, and spared his brother's life. Christ, in the same way, might plead with the Father the five wounds received on Calvary. "I have often heard an old man pray for children," said the preacher, "and have heard him ask for things which I am sure were not proper to ask for for children. It was so long since he had been a child that he had quite forgotten what children's

feelings were. It was not so with Jesus. But you must remember also to pray for yourselves. Jesus prayed for Peter that his faith might not fail, but it did, because Peter did not pray for himself. 4. Christ wishes children to be happy, and they could not be that without the pardon of sin and hope of heaven. 5. The text taught that there are a great many children indeed in heaven. It is true there were there Jesus, and the patriarchs, and prophets, and angels, and apostles, but there were more children there, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. That last text meant that the glory of heaven was open to children, but it also meant that the population of heaven was made up of children. They would be there of every colour, —from every quarter of the globe. Last Christmas morning one little child was in that chapel who is in heaven now. "Shall we go there when we die?" was the question which concluded and enforced the preacher's appeal, which was plain and simple and thoroughly adapted to its end. Of course there were some little ones who could not follow the preacher, but it seemed to me that evidently the majority did. It is to be hoped they did, for none but those who live in London can tell what are its trials and sorrows for such as they, or what are their needs. From the

Sunday-school even many a lad and girl has gone astray. It was only a few weeks before that, at a midnight meeting in the Euston Road of some eighty or thereabouts—I cannot speak within one or two—some seventy fallen, weeping women confessed that they had been Sunday scholars, and amongst them even there were Sunday-school teachers! Of the hundreds who trooped joyously into Finsbury Chapel on our last bright, joyous Christmas morning, who can say what may be the end? Of this one thing, however, we may rest assured, it will be long before some forget the wise, kindly words listened to then, the songs in which they then took a part, or the prayers that then went up to heaven for them.

DR. PARKER AT THE POULTRY.

"What are you doing?" said lately one of London's biggest D.D.'s to a visitor from the country. "Oh, sir, I am in the ministry now," was the somewhat exulting reply. "Ah, but, my brother," said the querist again, "is the ministry in you?" Rather an important question that, and a question to which, alas! many ministers would be unable to give a very satisfactory reply. When I see a nervous, timid, feeble, hesitating, wavering brother in the pulpit, I

think of the Doctor's question as one from which such a man would instinctively shrink.

Dr. Parker belongs to another and a rarer class. The ministry is in him as a divine call, and not as an accidental profession. He speaks as one having authority. In an age of negation, and mistrust, and little faith, he is as positive as if spiritual truths had been audible to his bodily ear and seen with the bodily eye. Amidst the perplexities of a theology ever shifting in external phraseology, where man's wisdom has darkened God's light as revealed in His Word, where the miasma of doubt has repressed and stinted Christian life, he walks with a masculine tread, and he does so not from ignorance but from knowledge, because he knows how difficult is the way, how dark the path, how easily error comes to us in the form of truth, how the devil himself can assume the shape and borrow the language of an angel of light. He has got good standing ground, but he knows how treacherous is the soil, and what pitfalls lie open to catch the rash, and reckless, and over-confident. His is the strength of the athlete who has become what he is by years of careful training, protracted conflicts, and painful discipline, and in all his words, and they are many, you can hear as it were

the ring of victory and assured success. Physically he looks and speaks like a man. What he says he means, and what he means he believes. He is not the kind of man to write an apology for Christianity; he would laugh to scorn the idea. He can laugh at much, because, as Hobbes says, to do so implies superiority, and Dr. Parker, strong in his faith in the everlasting Gospel, has an immense feeling of superiority; and as you listen he takes you up with him into his coign of vantage, and you laugh too. It is good to see wit as well as logic and learning in the pulpit; to feel up in that serene height, where the preacher has it all himself, and none may gainsay him, there is humanity there, a flesh and blood reality, and not a respectable academic ghost in whose brain there is hollowness and in whose eye there is no fire of speculation. What a head the man has—ample, well formed, well and fairly developed. What a voice the man has—strong as a mountain torrent, impetuous, irresistible, mastering all, carrying like a Niagara all before it. Dr. Parker is better off than Paul. Apparently the earthen vessel in which he has his treasure is of admirable adaptation and utility.

London has gained and Manchester has lost Dr. Parker. Already he has made himself no stranger

in London. To many his "Ecce Deus" has commended itself as the work of a vigorous thinker, and all have confessed that his "Springdale Abbey" was full of very clever talk. No ordinary preacher could have written such books, that was clear. In Manchester he had become a success. How came he to be such? Partly I have explained the reason. In the first place, in an age of doubt, of negative theology, of blinding and bewildering speculation—when between the so-called Christian and the Cross in all its eternal lustre has risen up a fog of gloom—when the Gospel of unbelief and despair has come into fashion, so that when we listen for the shout of psalm or the holy exultation of prayer, we hear instead

> "An agony
> Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
> All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
> Or hath come since the making of the world."

Dr. Parker has a living faith. And then again he has a deep sense of what the pulpit requires, and an unmitigated scorn of that kind of preaching which is too common there. "Almighty God has to tolerate more puerility in His service than any monarch on earth. If Christianity had not been Divine it would have been ruined by many of its own preachers long

ere this. The wonder is, not that it has escaped the cruel hand of the infidel (it can double up a whole army of crazy atheists), but that it has survived the cruel kindness of its shallow expositors." Whose language, you ask, is this? Why, Dr. Parker's own. The preacher who can thus censure his fellows is bound to guard sacredly and constantly against that which he condemns, and to come to his pulpit with every feeling attuned and with every energy aroused for its gigantic work. Give to such a man the requisite brain and tongue, let him have the requisite delivery, let his lips be touched by that spirit which

> "Touched Isaiah's lips with hallowed fire,"

and you have a Dr. Parker. He has come to London —a difficult thing for any man to do, but in this case the step has been undertaken under peculiarly difficult circumstances. Time was when the City was the home of citizens, and many of the wealthiest and most influential of them went to the Poultry. That time has long gone by. It was when deacons shook their heads at Mr. Binney as not quite sound. Of all places on the earth the most deadly on a Sunday is the City of London, and especially that part of it in which the Poultry stands. At St. Mildred's, close by, it is im-

possible, or seems to be so, to collect a decent congregation. Will Dr. Parker succeed better? Some sort of answer was given to the question, when to a crowded and attentive congregation he preached what I may term his inaugural discourse. If I say it was an eloquent display I shall excite the Doctor's indignation, as he contemned the use of such phraseology in his sternest and most indignant manner. Nor indeed with regard to the discourse in question would the phrase be literally correct. No one can doubt the Doctor's eloquence, but in speaking of himself and his hopes and purposes in connexion with the Poultry—in showing the grand principles upon which he took his stand, and by means of which he was placed beyond the fear of failure, he aimed at something more than eloquent display. "I am preaching to myself as well as to you," said the Doctor in the course of his sermon; and such was in reality the case. For the work which he has to do, for the programme which he trusts to work out, truly indeed does the Doctor need the guidance of that Providence which shall go before, and which shall make the crooked places straight. This, indeed, was the Doctor's text. You will find it in Isaiah xlv. 2. From the beginning to the end of the service this was the

leading and appropriate idea. He commenced with Cowper's magnificent hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way." The portion of Scripture read was Christ's commission to the seventy to go and preach the Gospel all over the world; the prayer was an acknowledgment that the human will should be subordinated to the Divine; and it was "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah," which formed the closing song.

As Dr. Parker told us he was going to publish his sermon (his sermons now appear weekly, under the title of "The City Temple"), I need say little of the discourse, of which I have already given the text. It began with a reference to the triumph and danger of liberty—that man might go whether with God or without Him. Man was free, nor was his religion one of slavery. To those who considered such a statement to be a grand contradiction of what we know of eternal decrees, it was sufficient to reply that it could only be harmonized in the ecstasy of light and love. God will not make everything straight, but only in proportion as we trust Him and live with Him will our difficulties diminish. As to his text in particular, remarked Dr. Parker, it was first a warning—there are crooked places. It was a promise—

the crooked places God would make straight: all that we required was patience. Also it was a plan—God would go before us. Say some, that is God's sovereignty—that is the omnipotent Jehovah. No, it indicated His love, His tenderness, His care. In such an idea we do not dwarf God, but exalt Him. Then came the limitation of the promise. This going before was a question of character. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. That, however, was no motive for carelessness, but the reverse. The Doctor, in conclusion, spoke of himself. He had been told that in leaving Manchester and coming to the Poultry he was moving into a crooked place. In explanation he stated he did not look for the ordinary course of a minister. He looked at London, that immeasurable centre; he thought of the young men who come strangers to the metropolis, and with no friends to guide and guard them; and if he did not get people to come and hear him on the Sunday, he trusted they would do so on the Thursday, when there would be a service from twelve to one, when he would aim simply to touch the heart with a sense of sin and forgiveness. He also intended to use the printing-press. He had great faith in the printed page. It remained to be read at spare moments when a man had nothing

to do. Finally, said Dr. Parker, he spoke with fear and trembling, but he came there with a strong determination to succeed, and he appealed to all around to do their duty—not to carp, or criticise, or say unkind words, but to resolve to labour and to be guided by heavenly power and wisdom. At the close of the service there was a collection. After this the immense congregation streamed out into the open air, much to the astonishment of casual passengers, who did not understand what was the matter. The Poultry has a prosperous look, and they have got a new pulpit there almost as rotund, and bright, and buoyant as Dr. Parker himself.

I know not how the Sunday service succeeds, but the Thursday morning service is wonderfully well filled. In this busy age it is scarcely credible that in the busiest part of London, and at the busiest hour of the day, a chapel as large as the Poultry can be crowded, and is regularly crowded, with merchants and men of business and others. Yet such is the case, and Dr. Parker has succeeded in an attempt which, until he tried it, certainly seemed hazardous in the extreme. If the Doctor seems a little bombastic, it may well be forgiven him under these circumstances, especially when we remember that no

preacher can succeed in convincing others that he is worth hearing till he has become firmly convinced of that fact himself. A modest man I fear is out of place anywhere, but most of all so in the pulpit. It was in wisdom that Dr. Parker was selected for his post. I should think he is a preacher pre-eminently adapted to the young. Judged not by what he has done, but by years, the Doctor is almost a young man himself. There is youthful vigour in his full round face, in his small dark eyes; and certainly there is no small store of youthful enthusiasm in his heart. In his black hair and beard there is no suggestive tinge of grey. If he has passed through and left the golden portals of youth behind, it can only be but recently that he has done so, and there is still in him somewhat of its grace and glory. In another respect also the choice of Dr. Parker was appropriate. The Poultry Chapel is in the very heart of London; the chances were that most of the young men present—and, I might add, of the old ones too—were more or less engaged in some secular avocations. In like manner, so the writer has always understood, the Doctor's youthful years were passed. Hence it came to pass the old Poultry Chapel is in a flourishing state. The Doctor seemed in his right place, and, if we

may judge from appearances, the people seemed to think so.

MR. LYNCH'S THURSDAY EVENINGS.

In a great city like London there are many sources of pleasure completely overlooked. If people complain that life is dull—that it is monotonous—that it presents to them few objects of interest or attraction —I fancy they have chiefly themselves to blame. No man or woman either with heart or head need lead a barren life either in the country or in town. There is always something to do, to see, or to hear, and in London especially is there much to hear of which Londoners know but little. Such, at any rate, was the reflection of the writer one Thursday night as he made his way along the Hampstead Road to a neat little iron church on the left-hand side as you go from the City, and just before you reach Mornington Crescent. Every Sunday morning there preaches there the Rev. Thomas Lynch, the author of some choice prose and poetry—a man at whom there was a dead set made by certain religionists a few years ago, but who has long outlived that, and to whom that time of trial and of trouble was undoubtedly a most blessed event, inasmuch as it taught the gentle author of the

"Rivulet" his strength, both as regards himself and as regards the best of our religious teachers; and inasmuch as it demonstrated to all anew, and more clearly than ever, how hard, how cruel, how unmerciful dogmatic theologians could become. At that time Mr. Lynch was preaching in a chapel in one of the streets running from Tottenham Court Road into Fitzroy Square. He is now nearer Camden Town, and preaches in a building between which and the pastor there seems to be a kind of resemblance and sympathy; at any rate, as much as can exist between what is abstract and concrete—between matter and mind. The church is no Gothic edifice, hoary with time, but slender and modern, and, as much as possible, graceful. You wonder it has not been swept away by the storms of winter. A similar feeling exists when you look at Mr. Lynch. There are great mountains of men, whose tread is terrible, whose laugh is volcanic, whose heads are rugged rocks, whose bodies are bulls of Bashan, whose speech is as the roar of an angry sea, whose faces in summer parch you up like burning suns, or in winter darken you with angry clouds. To this genus Mr. Lynch does in no way belong. The fairies who assisted at Mr. Lynch's birth did very little for

him physically—at any rate, they robbed his bones of all flesh, and made his outward frame as spare as possible. It is to be wished also that they had endowed him with better health. Yet his figure cannot be termed ungraceful or his appearance unattractive. In his dress he is scrupulously neat. Even on week-day services he wears the white handkerchief, which when round the neck denotes that you are a swell on your way to dinner, or a waiter, or a gentleman of the clerical profession. His grey eye is full of enthusiasm, and kindles up a pale, dark face that otherwise might be dull. His voice is stronger and clearer than you would expect. You are agreeably surprised to find how animated and vigorous he can become. After all, and in spite of ill-health, time has dealt not ungently with Mr. Lynch. He is a trifle bald, and you can detect a greyish tint in his hair—that is all; but Mr. Lynch, I imagine, is not one of those who age fast. He has a happy cheerfulness apparently, which compensates for the poetic sensitiveness which frets away many a man's life, and which made a hard-headed Wordsworth write—

> "We poets in our youth begin in gladness,
> Whereof come in the end despondency and madness."

Indeed, Mr. Lynch's cheerfulness is evidently ever

welling up out of his heart and colouring all his thoughts and words. In his services this is everywhere apparent. He has much of the lithe action of the comedian, and he stands ever, like Garrick, between tragedy and comedy, one moment ready to make you smile, and the next touching all that is most earnest, most serious, most devout in our common nature. He leans on his little desk, his hands before him, and talks away, sweetly and devoutly, about things that interest all—things that have a spiritual bearing, things that are secular and profane, only to the secular and profane. There are not very many people to hear him; but then, they are hearers, and there is sympathy between the preacher and the pews. The Iron Duke said, "When you begin to turn in bed, it is time for you to get up." In a similar way it may be said, when the people begin to turn to look at the clock it is time the preacher or lecturer was done. The other night I found Mr. Lynch's service occupied nearly two hours, yet it did not seem wearisome or long. The service was commenced with chanting, and prayer, and reading scripture, and singing. Then there was a text, and a lecture or sermon from that text. On the occasion to which I refer the subject was John Howe, as an

illustration of that passage in Proverbs which predicates of the man diligent in his business that he shall stand before kings—a prediction literally verified in the case of John Howe, who was chaplain to Oliver Cromwell—a man greater than any king—and who had friendly converse with that Protestant hero, William the Third, the best king England ever had. Very vividly did Mr. Lynch bring out all that was noblest and brightest in John Howe's character and career, dwelling with evident unction on the many pregnant titles of Howe's works, which he seemed much to prefer to the works themselves, and in which he was right; for Howe's thoughts, it must be conceded, are not couched in the form and language most easy of apprehension to the men of to-day; and from the past, with some rare exceptions—those, of course, written in a dead language being the chief—it is vain to extract literature for the study and edification of the present. Religion is no exception to a universal law; indeed, more than anything else, it is required of him who preaches it that he should speak to living men in the living language of to-day—not according to formulas that have long died out, or in terms that have long become extinct; and this specially may be said of Mr. Lynch, that as much as any one he rea-

lizes this great law, and does use language and illustration and argument familiar to the men and women of London in this latter day—that he does not cease to be a man when in the pulpit, and deal with abstraction rather than with real life. When Mr. Lynch began his ministerial career this virtue was rarer than it is now, and of this desirable result Mr. Lynch deserves, at any rate, some of the credit. Be that as it may, the writer has one other thing to say. It seems to him that these Thursday evening lectures of Mr. Lynch's deserve a wide support. There are many in London who would be glad enough to attend. There are many living out of town who would find it worth while stopping an hour or two later on a Thursday evening. The service commences at a quarter past seven; and I believe generally Mr. Lynch takes some specific subject, such as "John Howe," or "Bells," or anything which seems to him notable. The writer heard also on the night in which he was there something about questions asked and answered; but on that he can say, as he knows, nothing.

CHAPTER IX.

THE UNITARIANS.

IN the apostolical Fathers we find," writes the Rev. Islay Burns, "for the most part only the simple Biblical statements of the deity and humanity of Christ in the practical form needed for general edification. Of those fathers Ignatius is the most deeply imbued with the conviction that the crucified Jesus is God incarnate, and indeed frequently calls Him, without qualification, God. The development of Christology in the scientific doctrine of the Logos begins with Justin and culminates in Origen. From him there proceed two opposite modes of conception, the Athanasian and the Arian, of which the former at last triumphs in the Council of Nice, and confirms its victory in the Council of Constantinople." By the Ebionites Christ was regarded as a mere man. By the Gnostics he was considered as superhuman; but in that capacity as one of a very numerous class. The doctrine of the absolute unity of God, alike in essence and personal subsistence, was held by the

Monachians, who are divided respectively into Dynamistic and Modalistic. As the latter held that the whole fulness of the Deity dwelt in Christ and only found in him a peculiar mode of manifestation, it was assumed that the natural inference was that the Father himself had died on the Cross. Hence to these heretics the name of Patripassians was applied by the orthodox. Sabellius, who maintained a Trinity, not of divine Persons but of successive manifestations under the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was one of the chief Patripassians. The Arian controversy, as Dean Stanley shows, turned on the relations of the divine persons before the first beginning of time.

If Dean Stanley be correct, at this time the Abyssinian Church is agitated by seventy distinct doctrines as to the union of the two natures in Christ. It is clear, then, no one man can epitomize all that has been uttered and written on this pregnant theme, over which the Church contended fiercely three hundred years. "Latin Christianity," writes Dean Milman, "contemplated with almost equal indifference Nestorianism and all its prolific race, Eutychianism, Monophysitism, Monothelitism." When the Reformation quickened free inquiry and reli-

gious life, Socinus appeared; the epitaph on his tomb shows what his friends thought of his doctrine. "Luther took off the roof of Babylon, Calvin threw down the walls, Socinus dug up the foundations." Furious persecution was the fate of the holders of his opinions; Servetus was burnt by Calvin; and Joan Bocher was sentenced to a similar fate by the boy-king Edward VI. for denying the doctrine of the Trinity. With tears in his eyes as he signed the warrant, he appealed to the Archbishop. "My Lord Archbishop, in this case I resign myself to your judgment; you must be answerable to God for it."

Unitarianism has made way in England. When Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act became law the Unitarians in England were a small sect, and had not a single place of worship. It was not till 1779 that it ceased to be required of Dissenting ministers that they should subscribe to the Articles of the Church of England previous to taking the benefit of the Toleration Act, and even this small boon was twice thrown out in the Upper House by the King's friends and the Bishops. In 1813, however, one of the most cruelly persecuting statutes which had ever disgraced the British code received its death-blow, and the Royal assent was given to an Act repealing all laws

passed against those Christians who impugn the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity. It was no easy matter to get this act of justice done; the Bishops and the Peers were obstinate. In 1772, we read, the Bishop of Llandaff made a most powerful speech, and produced from the writings of Dr. Priestley passages which equally excited the wonder and abhorrence of his hearers, and drew from Lord Chatham exclamations of "Monstrous! horrible! shocking!" A few years after we find Lord North contending it to be the duty of the State to guard against authorizing persons denying the doctrine of the Trinity to teach. Even as late as 1824, Lord Chancellor Eldon doubted (as he doubted everything that was tolerant in religion or liberal in politics) as to the validity of this Act, and hinted that the Unitarians were liable to punishment at common law for denying the doctrine of the Trinity. Yet the Unitarians have a remote antiquity. They can trace their descent to Apostolic times, and undoubtedly were an important element in the National Church in the days of William and the Hanoverian succession.

Dr. Parr, says Mr. Barker, "spoke to me of the latitudinarian divines with approbation. He agreed with me in thinking that the most brilliant era of the

British Church since the Reformation was when it abounded with divines of that school;" and certainly Unitarians may claim to be represented at the present day in Broad Churchmen within the Establishment, and in divines of a similar way of thinking without. They have been much helped by their antagonists. No man was less of a Unitarian than the late Archbishop Whately, yet, in a letter to Blanco White, he candidly confessed, "Nothing in my opinion tends so much to dispose an intelligent mind towards anti-Trinitarian views as the Trinitarian works."

As a sect, the Unitarians are a small body, and at one time were much given to a display of intelligent superiority as offensive in public bodies as in private individuals. They were narrow and exclusive, and had little effect on the masses, who were left to go to the bad, if not with supercilious scorn, at any rate with genteel indifference. There was in the old-fashioned Unitarian meeting-houses something eminently high and dry. In these days, when we have ceased to regard heaven—to quote Tom Hood—as anybody's rotten borough, we smile as a handful of people sing—

> "We're a garden walled around,
> Planted and made peculiar ground;"

yet no outsider a few years ago could have entered a Unitarian chapel without feeling that such, more or less, was the abiding conviction of all present. "Our predominant intellectual attitude," Mr. Orr confesses to be one reason of the little progress made by the denomination. A Unitarian could no more conceal his sect than a Quaker. Generally he wore spectacles; his hair was always arranged so as to do justice to his phrenological development; on his mouth there always played a smile, half sarcastic and half self-complacent. Nor was such an expression much to be wondered at when you remembered that, according to his own idea, and certainly to his own satisfaction, he had solved all religious doubts, cleared up all religious mysteries, and annihilated, as far as regards himself, human infirmities, ignorance, and superstition. It is easy to comprehend how a congregation of such would be eminently respectable and calm and self-possessed; indeed, so much so, that you felt inclined to ask why it should have condescended to come into existence at all. Mrs. Jarley's waxworks, as described by that lady herself, may be taken as a very fair description of an average Unitarian congregation at a no very remote date. Little Nell says, "I never saw any waxworks, ma'am;

is it funnier than *Punch?*" "Funnier?" said Mrs. Jarley, in a shrill voice, "it is not funny at all." "Oh," said Nell, with all possible humility. "It is not funny at all," repeated Mrs. Jarley; "it's calm, and what's that word again—critical? No, classical —that's it; it's calm and classical. No low beatings and knockings about; no jokings and squeakings like your precious *Punch's*, but always the same, with a constantly unchanging air of coldness and gentility." Now it was upon this coldness and gentility that the Unitarians took their stand; they eliminated enthusiasm, they ignored the passions, and they failed to get the people, who preferred, instead, the preaching of the most illiterate ranter whose heart was in the work.

In our day a wonderful change has come over Unitarianism. It is not, and it never was, the Arianism born of the subtle school of Alexandrian philosophy, and condemned by the orthodox Bishops at Nicea; nor is it Socinianism as taught in the sixteenth century, still less is it the Materialism of Priestley. Men of the warmest hearts and greatest intellects belonging to it actually disown the name, turn away from it as too cold and barren, and in their need of more light, and life, and love, seek in other

denominations what they lack in their own. The Rev. James Martineau, a man universally honoured in all sections of the universal church, confesses:—"I am constrained to say that neither my intellectual preference nor my moral admiration goes heartily with the Unitarian heroes, sects, or productions of any age. Ebionites, Arians, Socinians, all seem to me to contrast unfavourably with their opponents, and to exhibit a type of thought and character far less worthy, on the whole, of the true genius of Christianity. I am conscious that my deepest obligations, as a learner from others, are in almost every department to writers not of my own creed. In philosophy I have had to unlearn most that I had imbibed from my early text-books and the authors in chief favour with them. In Biblical interpretation I derive from Calvin and Whitby the help that fails me in Crell and Belsham. In devotional literature and religious thought I find nothing of ours that does not pale before Augustine Tauler and Pascal; and in the poetry of the Church it is the Latin or the German hymns, or the lines of Charles Wesley or Keble, that fasten on my memory and heart, and make all else seem poor and cold." This is the language of many beside Mr. Martineau—of all, indeed, to whom

a dogmatic theology is of little import compared with a Christian life.

Let us attempt to describe Unitarianism negatively. In one of his eloquent sermons in its defence, the late W. J. Fox said, "The humanity of Christ is not essential to Unitarianism; Dr. Price was a Unitarian as well as Dr. Priestley, so is every worshipper of the Father only, whether he believes that Christ was created before all worlds, or first existed when born of Mary. Philosophical necessity is no part of Unitarianism. Materialism is no part of Unitarianism. The denial of angels or devils is no part of Unitarianism." Unitarianism has no creed, yet briefly it may be taken to be the denial of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, or of the natural depravity of man, or that sin is the work of the devil, or that the Bible is a book every word of which was dictated by God, or that Christ is God united to a human nature, or that atonement is reconciliation of God to man. Furthermore, the Unitarians deny that regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit, or that salvation is deliverance from the punishment of sin, or that heaven is a state of condition without change, or that the torments of hell are everlasting. It may be that the Broad Churchman entertains very much the same

opinions, but then the Unitarian minister has this advantage over the Church clergyman, that he is free. He has not signed articles of belief of a contrary character. He has not to waste his time and energy in sophistications which can deceive no one, still less to preach that doctrine so perilous to the soul, and destructive of true spiritual growth, and demoralizing to the nation, that a religious, conscientious man may sign articles that can have but one sense and put upon them quite another. Surely one of the most sickening characteristics of the age is that divorce between the written and the living faith, which, assuming to be progress, is in reality cowardice.

In our day we have seen something of an Evangelical Alliance, that is, a manifestation of the great fact that people are yearning after a Catholic union, and are caring less and less for denominational differences. The Unitarians all speak and write of the orthodox as of a body of Christians perfectly distinct from themselves. Yet there is an approximation between them, nevertheless. Unitarianism, as it becomes a living faith—as it leans to the theology of the sweetest singers and most impassioned orators of the universal Church—becomes in sentiment and

practice orthodox; while orthodoxy, as it grows enlightened, and burst the bonds of habit, and, laden with the spoils of time, gathers up the wisdom and the teaching of all the ages underneath the sun, sanctions the Rationalism and the spirit of free inquiry for which Unitarianism has ever pleaded and its martyrs have died in our own and other lands. Actually, at the meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Society, an effort was made to get rid of the title altogether, and to call themselves instead a British and Foreign Free Christian Association, on the plea that the Christian Church consists of all who desire to be the children of God in the spirit of Jesus Christ His Son, and that, therefore, no association for the promotion of a doctrine which belongs to controversial theology can represent the Church of Christ. To this Unitarianism has attained in our time. This is the teaching of Foster, and Ham, and Ierson, and Martineau—a teaching seemingly in accordance with the spirit of the age. Unitarian theology is always coloured with the philosophy of the hour, and consequently it is now spiritual and transcendental instead of material and necessitarian.

As regards London, the statistics of Unitarianism are easy of collection. In their register we have the

names of fifteen places of worship, where Holy Scripture is the only rule of faith, and difference of opinion is no bar to Christian communion. In reality Unitarians are stronger than they seem, as in their congregations you will find many persons of influence, of social weight, of literary celebrity. For instance, Sir Charles Lyell and Lord Amberley are, I believe, among the regular attendants at Mr. Martineau's chapel in Portland Street. At that chapel for many years Charles Dickens was a regular hearer. The late Lady Byron, one of the most eminent women of her day, worshipped in Essex Street Chapel, when Mr. Madge preached there. In London the Unitarians support a domestic mission, a Sunday-school association, an auxiliary school association, and a London district Unitarian society.

AGGRESSIVE UNITARIANS.

It is not often that Unitarianism is aggressive, or that it seeks the heathen in our streets perishing for lack of knowledge. Apparently it dwells rather on the past than the present, and prefers the select and scholarly few to the unlettered many. Most Unitarian preachers lack popular power; hence it is that their places of worship are rarely filled, and that they seem

tacitly to assume that such is the natural and necessary condition of their denomination. It is with them as it used to be with the old orthodox Dissenters in well endowed places of worship some thirty or forty years ago. Of them, I well remember one in a leading seaport in the eastern counties. I don't believe there was such another heavy and dreary place in all East Anglia, certainly there never was such a preacher; more learned, more solemn, more dull, more calculated in a respectable way to send good people to sleep, or to freeze up the hot blood and marrow of his youthful hearers. Once and but once there was a sensation in that chapel. It was a cold evening in the very depth of winter. There was ice in the pulpit, and ice in the pew. The very lamps seemed as if it was impossible for them to burn, as the preacher in his heaviest manner discoursed of themes on which seraphs might love to dwell. All at once rushed in a boy, exclaiming "Fire, fire!" The effect was electric—in a moment that sleepy audience was startled into life, every head was raised and every ear intent. Happily the alarm was a false one, but for once people were awake, and kept so till the sermon was done. It is the aim of Mr. Applebee in the same way to rouse up the Unitarians, and in a certain

sense he has succeeded. He has now been preaching some eighteen months in London, in the old chapel on Stoke Newington Green, where, for many years, Mrs. Barbauld was a regular attendant, and where long the pulpit was filled by no less a distinguished personage than Burke and George the Third's Dr. Price; the result is that the chapel is now well filled. It is true it is not a very large one; nevertheless, till Mr. Applebee's advent, it was considerably larger than the congregation. Before Mr. Applebee came to town he had produced a similar effect at Devonport; when he settled there he had to preach to a very small congregation, but he drew people around him; and ere he left a larger chapel had to be built. I take it a great deal of his popularity is due to his orthodox training. It is a fact not merely that Unitarianism ever recruits itself from the ranks of orthodoxy, but that it is indebted to the same source for its ablest, or rather most effective ministers.

In the morning Mr. Applebee preaches at Stoke Newington; in the evening he preaches at 245, Mile End. It seems as if in that teeming district no amount of religious agency may be ignored or despised. In the morning of the Sabbath as you walk there, you could scarce fancy you were in a Christian land. It

is true, church bells are ringing and the public-houses are shut up, and well-clad hundreds may be seen on their way to their respective places of worship, and possibly you may meet a crowd of two or three hundred earnest men in humble life singing revival hymns as they wend their way to the East London Theatre, where Mr. Booth teaches of heaven and happiness to those who know little of one or the other; nevertheless, the district has a desolate, God-forsaken appearance. There are butchers' shops full of people, pie-shops doing a roaring trade, photographers all alive, as they always are, on a Sunday. If you want apples or oranges, boots or shoes, ready-made clothes, articles for the toilette or the drawing-room, newspapers of all sorts—you can get them anywhere in abundance in the district; and as you look up the narrow courts and streets on your left, you will see in the dirty, eager crowds around ample evidence of Sabbath desecration. I heard a well-known preacher the other day say it was easy to worship God in Devonshire. Equally true is it that it is not easy to worship Him in Mile End or Whitechapel. The Unitarians assume that a large number of intelligent persons abstain from attending a religious service on Sundays in the most part "because the doctrines

usually taught" are "adverse to reason and the plain teaching of Jesus Christ." Under this impression they have opened the place in Mile End. In a prospectus widely circulated in the district, they publish a statement of their creed as follows: 1. That "there is but one God, one undivided Deity, and one Mediator, between God and man—the man Christ Jesus." 2. That "the life and teachings of Jesus Christ are the purest, the divinest, and truest;" His death consecrating His testimony and completing the devotion of His life; his resurrection and ascension forming the pledge and symbol of their own. 3. "That sin inevitably brings its own punishment, and that all who break God's laws must suffer the penalty in consequence;" at the same time they "reject the idea with abhorrence that God will punish men eternally for any sins they may have committed or may commit." Such is the formula of doctrine, on which as a basis the Unitarian Mission at Mile End has been established, and to a certain extent with some measure of success. It is charged generally against Unitarians that they have no positive dogma. The Unitarianism of Mr. Applebee has no such drawback. He has a definite creed, which, whether you believe it or not, at any rate you can understand. In the

eyes of many working men, that is of the class to whom he preaches at Mile End, he has also the additional advantage of being well known in the political arena. As a lecturer on behalf of advanced principles in many of our large towns he has produced a very great effect. I confess I have not yet overcome the horror I felt when I saw at the last election how night after night he spoke at Northampton on behalf of Mr. Bradlaugh's candidature. Surely a secularist can have no claim as such on the sympathies of a Christian minister. Yet at Northampton Mr. Applebee laboured as if the success of Mr. Bradlaugh were the triumph of Gospel truth, and as if in the pages of the *National Reformer* the working men, to whom it especially appeals, might learn the way to life eternal. But Mr. Applebee is by no means alone. In Stamford Street Chapel and in Islington you have what I believe the Unitarians would consider still more favourable specimens of aggressive Unitarianism.

CHAPTER X.

THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

TERTULLIAN wrote in his apology, or rather in his appeal, to the heathen persecutors on behalf of the Christians of his age, "We are but a people of yesterday, and yet we have filled every place belonging to you—cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camps, your tribes, companies, palaces, senates, forum. We leave you your temples only. We can count your armies; our numbers in a single province will be greater." The language was boastful, but it was founded on fact. Wesleyan orators might indulge in a similar rhetorical flourish. In 1729 John Wesley returned to Oxford, intending to reside there permanently as a tutor. He found that his brother Charles, then a student at Christ Church, had, during his absence, and chiefly through his influence, acquired views and feelings corresponding with his own, and had prevailed on two or three

young men to unite with him in receiving the Lord's Supper weekly, and in cultivating strict morality in their conduct, and regularity in their demeanour. "Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up," said one. The name took at once, and was thenceforth applied derisively to the little band. To this company John Wesley united himself; and of it his ardour and his wonderful talent of organization and for ruling his fellows soon made him the head. In the world's history a hundred and thirty years is but a little while; the fathers and founders of Wesleyan Methodism have as it were but recently passed away. There may be some living now whose little eyes saw Wesley's body carried to the grave in 1791, or whose young ears heard the last public utterances of the dying saint. And now it appears from the recently-published returns of the Conference that the total number of members, not mere attendants, at Wesleyan places of worship, is in Great Britain at the present time 342,380, being an increase of 5310; and there are upon trial besides for Church membership 24,926 candidates. A people which have thus grown, which have thus become a power in the State, to whom Dr. Pusey has appealed for aid, surely are well worth a study.

In an exhaustive work by Mr. Pierce we have, as it were, the inner life of Wesleyan Methodism, methodically arranged and placed in chronological order. "The attempt," says the Rev. G. Osborn, D.D., in his Introductory Preface, "is made in honesty and candour; and has required a large amount of labour on the part of the compiler, which, however, his love and admiration of the system have made, if not absolutely pleasant, yet far less irksome than under other circumstances it would have been." We must, in fairness, add that Mr. Pierce has certainly exhausted his theme, and his non-Wesleyan readers. A catechism of 800 large pages of small type is more trying than even that of the Assembly of Divines. Surely it was possible to do what Mr. Pierce has done in a more readable form. Still, however, his work is invaluable as a cyclopædia of Wesleyan faith, and organization, and practice.

Mr. Wesley had originally no intention of seceding from the Church of England. Dr. Stevens, in his very interesting work, has shown how, step by step, he was forced into secession, and was compelled, by the force of circumstances—the irresistible logic of events—to abandon his very strong Church principles. In this respect Conference has rigidly ad-

hered to Wesley's teaching. "What we are," it stated in 1824, "as a religious body we have become both in doctrine and discipline by the leadings of the providence of God. But for the special invitation of the Holy Spirit that great work of which we are all the subjects, and which bears upon it marks so unequivocal of an eminent work of God, could not have existed. In that form of discipline and government which it has assumed it was adapted to no preconceived plan of man. Our venerable founder kept only one end in view—the diffusion of Scriptural authority through the land, and the preservation of all who had believed through grace in the simplicity of the Gospel. This guiding principle he steadily followed, and to that he surrendered cautiously but faithfully whatever in his preconceived opinions he discovered to be contrary to the indications of Him whose the work was, and to whom he had yielded up himself implicitly as His servant and instrument. In the further growth of the societies the same guidance of Providential circumstances, the same signs of the times, led to that full provision for the direction of the societies, and for their being supplied with all the ordinances of the Christian Church, and to that more perfect pastoral care which the number of the

members and the vastness of the congregations (collected not out of the spoils of other churches, but out of the world which lieth in wickedness) imperatively required." Thus, practically abhorring the name of Dissent, Methodists became Dissenters themselves, and certainly as a sect put forth, as the above extract teaches, the strongest claims to a Divine origin and sanction.

In 1784 Conference had a legal habitation and a name. All power was then placed in its hands as regards the Wesleyans. "The duration of the yearly assembly of Conference shall not be less than five days nor more than three weeks." It has to fill up vacancies by death, elect a President and Secretary, expel or receive preachers—who must, however, have been in connexion with it as preachers for twelve months,—and regulate all the affairs of the body. Appointments of preachers are limited for three years. According to the original rule, no person could be a member of the Methodist Society unless he met in class. If he neglected to do so for three weeks in succession (if not prevented by sickness, distance, or unavoidable business), he was considered by such neglect to exclude himself. Consequently, the meeting in class is still made a fundamental con-

dition of membership, and is indeed the only gate of admission into society. Once a quarter each of these classes is visited by one of the travelling preachers, for the purpose of ascertaining the spiritual state of every member, and giving to each a ticket or printed badge of membership, by the production of which he is admitted to any of the more private means of grace. The preachers are instructed to give notes to none till they are recommended by a leader with whom they have met at least two months on trial. If in the opinion of a leader any reasonable objection exists to the character and conduct of any person who is on trial, such may be stated, and, if established to the satisfaction of the meeting, the ticket may be withheld. No backslider after gross sin may be readmitted till after three months. All members are expected to meet in the classes belonging to their respective circuits, and all persons acting as local preachers, class-leaders, stewards, conductors of prayer-meetings, or sustaining any other office in the body, are expected to belong to the circuits in which they reside. In order to avoid conformity to the world, it is forbidden to teach children dancing, to dress according to the fashion of the day, to drink spirits, to smoke tobacco, or take snuff, to indulge in

evil conversation or strife. Music, and such-like diversions, are also interdicted. In the Conference of 1836 similar injunctions were repeated, as it observed with sincere regret in some quarters "a disposition to indulge in and encourage amusements which it cannot regard as harmless or allowable." The strict observance of the Sabbath is enforced. On that day members are not to employ a barber, or to trade, or go to a feast, or engage in any military exercise. In 1848, convinced of the great and growing importance of a careful observance of the Lord's day to the Church of Christ and the nation at large, the Conference appointed a committee to watch over the general interests of the Sabbath, to observe the course of events in reference to it, to collect such information as may serve the cause of Sabbath observance, to correspond with persons engaged in similar designs, and to report from year to year the result of their inquiries, with such suggestions as they may think proper to offer. The duty of family worship is strongly recommended. The power of expulsion is conferred only on preachers, who have ever appointed leaders, chosen stewards, and admitted members. No one is to belong to the society who is guilty of smuggling or bribery at elections.

For the support of their ministers most careful provision has been made. The direct means by which funds are raised is that of weekly and quarterly collections in the classes, and quarterly collections in all the chapels. It is expected that every member, in accordance with the original rule of Mr. Wesley, should contribute at least one penny per week and one shilling per quarter.

I have spoken of the class meetings. Band Societies are the same, except that they are divided into smaller companies and are on a stricter plan as to the faithful interchange of mutual reproof and advice. The questions proposed to every one before he is admitted are such as these: Have you forgiveness of your sins? Have you peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? Have you the witness of God's Spirit with your own that you are a child of God? Is the love of God shed abroad in your heart? Has no sin, outward or inward, dominion over you? Do you desire to be told of all your faults? Do you desire that every one of us should tell you from time to time whatever we fear —whatever we hear concerning you—that in doing this we should cut to the quick and search your heart to the bottom? And so on. Again, at every

meeting it is to be asked, "What known sins have you committed since our last meeting? What temptations have you met with? How were you delivered? What have you thought, said, or done of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?" To the members of these bands the minutest injunctions are given. Amongst other things, they are to "pawn nothing—no, not to save life."

Society Meetings were instituted by Mr. Wesley immediately after the formation of the first Methodist Society, and were regarded by him of great importance in a spiritual point of view. All preachers were to hold them on the Lord's day; only those members who had tickets were to be admitted. On these occasions the society is to be closely and affectionately addressed by the preacher on those important subjects which relate to personal and domestic religion. A Methodist love-feast is a meeting at which none are present but the members of the society, and such as have obtained special permission from the minister. The meeting begins with singing and prayer, after which the stewards, or other officials of the society, distribute to each person a portion of bread or cake, and then a little water. A collection is then made for the poor. Liberty is then given to all to relate

their religious experience in accordance with the words of the Psalmist—"Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell what He hath done for my soul." This service is usually held once a quarter, continues about two hours, and is concluded with prayer. The times for holding public prayer-meetings are not fixed by any established rule of the connexion, but are left to the discretion of the superintendent of the circuit, who usually appoints such times as may be most convenient to the people of the district. Prayer-meetings are generally held on Sunday mornings and week-days. Missionary prayer-meetings are held once a month, and meetings in private houses for prayer are strongly recommended. Quarterly days of fasting and humiliation are also held. The religious services known as Watch Nights are usually celebrated on the New Year's-eve, but they are not always confined to the close of the year, for it is the custom of some places to hold them quarterly. On the first Sunday afternoon in the New Year, a solemn service is held entitled the Renewing of the Covenant. It generally commences at two and closes at five. None but members or those who have obtained special permission from the preacher may be present.

Baptism is regarded by the Methodists as a dedicatory act on the part of Christian parents. The Sacrament is their most solemn and sacred festival. In the bread and wine they see no mystical efficacy, but a significant emblem of the body and blood of Christ; but they do not make it the test of Church membership. Originally the Wesleyans went to their parish church for the purpose of celebrating it, and it was not till after Wesley's death that the body received the Sacrament in their own chapels, and from their own ministers.

On the Sabbath morning public worship is usually commenced by the reading of the Church of England service in a more or less abridged form. The Conference has appointed that, where this is not done, the lessons for the day, as appointed by the Calendar, should be read. A hymn is then sung from a hymn-book compiled by Charles Wesley, and subsequently much enlarged. Extemporaneous prayer follows; then another hymn; then, unless the Church service has been previously used, the reading of portions of the Scriptures; then an extemporaneous sermon, and the worship is concluded with singing and prayer. With the exception of the Church service, the same order is observed in the evening.

Among Wesleyan institutions must be placed first and foremost pastoral instruction. Catechumen classes for the instruction and edification of the young are held by catechists. Sunday-schools were next established; then day and infant schools. In 1843 steps were taken for the establishment of the Wesleyan normal schools in Westminster. This led in 1856 to the establishment of the Westminster Training College. Other schools, such as those at Sheffield, Taunton, and Dublin exist for the children of such as can pay for a good education for their children. The Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools are supported by the denomination for the free training of the children of preachers. Then steps were taken for the establishment of the Wesleyan Theological Institution at Richmond and Didsbury. In 1866 it was resolved to have one at Headingley for training missionaries. The responsibility of recommending candidates for the ministry originally rested upon the superintendent. He proposes him to the quarterly meeting. The candidate is then recommended to the ensuing annual district meeting, and they recommend him to Conference, who decide. The candidate must previously have been a local preacher. After a certain time of trial the candidate is ordained

or admitted into full connexion, after a private examination by the President and a few senior ministers whom he may select. The ordination is by imposition of hands. No travelling preacher can marry during the term of his probation without violating the rules and rendering himself liable to be dismissed from his itinerancy. There are besides, assistants and superintendent preachers. Every preacher shall be considered as a supernumerary for four years after he has desisted from travelling, and shall afterwards be deemed superannuated. No person is eligible to be a local preacher unless he be a regularly accredited member of society, and meet in class. He has to undergo an examination of a private nature.

It would take far more space than I have at command to continue the subject. The Wesleyans have a Stationary Committee to draw up a plan for stationing ministers; a Committee to guard their privileges; a Committee to look after and support worn-out preachers; another to consider the case of the widows; another for the maintenance of the children of ministers; another for the Home Mission and what is called the Contingent Fund. In 1862 Juvenile Home and Foreign Missionary Societies were esta-

blished. The General Wesleyan Missionary Society, as it is now known, dates from 1817.

The chapels are, of course, the property of the denomination, and the same may be said of the preachers' dwelling-houses. There is a Chapel Loan Fund, a Connexional Relief and Extension Fund, a Wesleyan Chapel Committee, and a Metropolitan Committee for the same purpose, which, since 1862, has granted 11,625*l.* to nineteen chapels in the metropolitan districts, which cost altogether 89,499*l.*, and gave accommodation to more than 17,000 hearers.

The Methodist Book Establishment consists of the President and ex-President, the members of the London Book Committee, thirty-nine travelling preachers, and the representatives of the Irish Conference. There is also a Wesleyan Tract Society.

Such is Methodism on paper; of Methodism in practice we can only say *Circumspice.* In London there are 132 Wesleyan, 54 Primitive Methodist, 52 United Methodist Free Church, 9 Reformed Wesleyan, and 13 Methodist New Connexion Chapels.

AT A WATCH-NIGHT SERVICE.

Methodism has one special institution. Its love-feasts are old—old as Apostolic times. Its class-

meetings are the confessional in its simplest and most unobjectionable type, but in the institution of the watch-night it boldly struck out a new path for itself. In publicly setting apart the last fleeting moments of the old year and the first of the new to penitence, and special prayer, and stirring appeal, and fresh resolve, it has set an example which other sects are preparing to follow. In the Church of England the Methodist plan is being extensively carried out. On last New Year's-eve there were midnight services in the churches in all parts of London. Especially have the Ritualists availed themselves of the opportunity. Dr. Cumming chose the occasion for preaching a sermon to young men, and Mr. Spurgeon's great congregation met, as usual, to see the old year out and the new year in. But after all, the Methodist services were the most numerous. In the metropolitan district they advertised services on watch-night at no less than seventy-three chapels, and there were other smaller ones at which watch-services were held, though they were not advertised. At first sight there seem to be many obvious objections to midnight meetings. They keep people up late; they keep them out in the streets late; they interfere with the routine of business and the prescribed order of domestic life; they cause delicate people to wake up next morning

with an aching brow and a fevered frame. To others they bring catarrh, disorder of the mucous membrane, cold, necessitating as a remedy water-gruel and cough mixtures. Obviously, however, these are minor considerations. It may be asked: Is not the soul, that never dies, of more value than the body, which to-morrow may be dust and ashes? The life that now is—what is it compared with the life that is to come?

Last year's eve I was one of a crowd that found their way to the ancient head-quarters of Wesleyanism—the fine old chapel which, it is to be hoped, will not be improved off the face of the earth, in the City Road. It was an unpleasant night to tear one's self away from one's study fire or the friendly circle. The rain was heavy, the streets were a mass of mud, and the melancholy lamps, which are the disgrace of such a metropolis as London, did little more than make the darkness visible. Over all the City a Stygian gloom prevailed, except where the light blazed forth from the gin-palaces, which seemed, as I passed, to be doing a roaring trade, and to be filled with sots but too happy to find an excuse for the glass. Occasionally also a cigar shop threw out a little ray of light on the pavement and across the street, and now

and then from an upper window the lamps gleamed, and you heard the click of billiards. So still was the traffic that even the beggars had gone home. Here and there an omnibus, here and there a cab crawling for the last time, for the new Act was to come into operation the next day—here and there a policeman, here and there a belated clerk, here and there an unfortunate—such were all you saw as you paced along the deserted City that night. You could almost fancy its inhabitants had fled as if an enemy were on its way, or as if the plague ran riot in its streets. A little after ten the scene began to change. Doors were opened by heads of families doubtful as to the state of the weather. Up area steps creeped ancient males and females to do what they had done years and years before. Children, young men and women, fathers and mothers, masters and servants, got out into the streets. I followed them, and was soon seated in the chapel in the City Road. All round me were monuments of Wesleyan worthies. It were a task too long to describe their virtues or record their memories here. Up in that pulpit Wesley preached, and there the imprint of his genius yet survives. It is hard to realize what a power Wesleyanism is. I did not expect to see many; in reality the commodious

chapel was well filled. The service began at half-past ten, but it was not till long past that hour that the congregation had entirely assembled. It seemed to to me this was a great mistake. For half an hour or so the opening and shutting of doors and the entrance of hearers interfered much with the comfort of those who had already come. Under these circumstances the service was trying to all taking part in it. Neither preacher nor hearer had a fair chance. In reality the attraction of the night was the sermon of the pastor of the place, the Rev. M. C. Osborn, and he did not begin till his pulpit had been occupied by an assistant for an hour. After it was all over it puzzled me to perceive what had been gained by the preliminary service and the assistant's sermon. The assistant was a young man, and it was the sort of a sermon a properly trained young man would preach. The subject was the barren figtree, a striking subject treated with all the tediousness of commonplace. It was clear the preacher had read more than he felt, or he would not have spoken of the responsibility of a figtree, or bothered himself with the threefold sense which cropped up under his three divisions—first, as to the figtree, then as to the state of the Jews to whom Christ told his parable, and then as to its applicability at the

present time. His great virtues were fluency, perfect coolness and self-possession, and a distinct and powerful utterance. When he came to the terrible climax, when he spoke of the condemnation which awaited the finally impenitent, when he repeated how there could be no hope for such as they, how for them there was agony of which no tongue could tell the horror, or no imagination conceive, there was no pathos in his tones, no tear trembling in his eye, no sign of sensibility in his heart. The Saviour wept over Jerusalem as He saw the coming fate of the city that had mocked at His warnings, that had stoned the prophets, that was to crucify Himself. It did not seem to me that the sermon produced much effect. When it has been the writer's privilege to converse with Wesleyans they have contrasted their warmth with the coldness of the services of other denominations; but in Episcopalian church or Independent or Baptist chapel—nay, at a Quaker's meeting—such a service as that preliminary to Mr. Osborn's appearance might have been held without causing any sensation on account of its extra warmth and fire. It was plain, and simple, and orthodox, and when it was over the people seemed to feel that the proper thing had been said, and that was all.

Mr. Osborn next entered the pulpit, while the people were singing with well-trained voices and without the help of an organ one of the well-known Wesleyan hymns. His appearance excites confidence. As he stood up there seemed in his face something of the fatherly feeling of a real, not a conventional bishop. A lay brother engaged in prayer. In spite of its boisterous tone and stentorian *Ohs* and *ands* it was deep, and heartfelt, and impressive, and invoked the responses which custom permits in a Wesleyan chapel alone. Then came a short sermon from Mr. Osborn, from the text in Jeremiah which tells how "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." In his hands the text suggested three thoughts —1. There are special seasons for men to become religious. 2. There is a possibility of letting such seasons pass away unimproved. 3. A time will come when the consciousness of such neglected seasons will awaken in the mind bitter memory and unavailing regret. The sermon was in its way wonderfully ripe and full. To every man living under the Gospel is salvation offered. To some that offer is made in youth, or by the preaching of the Gospel, or by providential dispensations, or by revivals of religion occurring in their neighbourhood. But God never coerces

any one, nor interferes with man's free will. Human law proceeds upon the supposition of man's perfect ability to control his actions, and God does the same. The grace of God is resistible, as the Bible shows in the case of the Antediluvians, of Pharaoh, and Jerusalem ; but too late people who resist that grace will remember it, and that remembrance will form the most bitter ingredient in their lot. As it is, when people are going wrong, they refuse to think. The preacher then dwelt on the last words—not saved. Most powerfully did he carry out that meaning as he pictured the shipwrecked mariner who sees the sail that was to have saved him pass out of sight; or as the besieged army behold the succour that was to have rescued them cut off; or as the criminal left for execution hears there is no reprieve for him; or as that poor woman with her babe and little ones, who found the other night (alluding to a tragedy which had just occurred) the fire-escape failed to reach them, and fell a sacrifice to the devouring flames. But whilst there was life there was hope; and then the preacher appealed to all on that last night of the old year to accept God's offer of life, and to cast themselves at His feet. For about ten minutes every head was bowed in silent prayer. In that

great assembly I saw no wandering eye; and then, just after the clock had struck twelve, all rose to sing—

"Come let us anew our journey pursue;"

and after a short prayer by the preacher for blessings during the coming year, the service closed, and out I went into the streets, suddenly as it were wakened up into life—while church bells rang out the old 1869, and rang in A.D. 1870.

CHAPTER XI.

THE QUAKERS.

MODERN Christianity, it is often said, has little in common with that of apostolic times: I fear it is equally true that the Quakerism of to-day has little in common with the heroic Quakerism of an earlier day. It was in 1646, during the prevalence of civil and religious commotions, that George Fox commenced his labours as minister of the Gospel, being then in the twenty-third year of his age. It was a hard time of it he and his disciples had; no men ever fared worse and for less provocation given, at the hands of arbitrary powers, than did the Quakers. Baxter thus describes them:—"They made the light which every man hath within him to be his sufficient rule, and consequently the Scripture and ministry were set light by. They spake much for the dwelling and working of the Spirit in us, but little of justification and the pardon of sin and our

reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ. They pretend their dependence on the Spirit's conduct against set times of prayer and against sacraments, and against undue esteem of Scripture and ministry. They will not have the Scriptures called the Word of God. Their principal zeal lieth in railing at the ministers as hirelings, deceivers, false prophets, &c., and in refusing to swear before a magistrate, or to put off their hat to any, or to say *you* instead of *thou* or *thee*, which are their words to all. At first they did use to fall into wailings and tremblings at their meetings, and pretend to be intently acted on by the Spirit, but now that is ceased. They only meet, and he that pretendeth to be moved by the Spirit speaketh, and sometimes they say nothing but sit an hour or more in silence and then depart." The most fiery, the most untameable of men were the old Quakers, now a Friend is the sleekest and fattest of men; lives in a style of the utmost comfort, and wears the best of everything; there are no such homes of luxury, no such lives of ease as amongst the Quakers. It is no wonder they are a long-lived race. They mingle little with the world, and find a peace which often the worldlings miss. As a religious organization they are becoming weaker every day; they have a

few chapels in various parts of London, but as the old worshippers die off no new ones appear. At their last annual meeting Mr. R. Barclay, who referred with satisfaction to the fact that all over the land, Sunday by Sunday, 1100 Friends were engaged in teaching 1400 children and 3000 adults, regretted to find that no other Church had declined so much either in this country or in America since 1720. In the United States 13,000 seats were closed in the meeting-houses between 1850 and 1860. "If," said he, "other Churches had declined as we have done, Christianity must have died out." As regards the metropolis they seem to be in a little better condition; the last statistics of membership show an increase of 95 in the year, the whole number being 6608 males, 7286 females; total, 13,894; the births exactly balanced the deaths. There were 121 new members from convincement and 61 resignations, against 31 disownments there were 19 reinstated. The habitual attenders at the places of worship are 3803, being an increase of 145. It was remarked by a senior Friend that the resignations were fewer and the convincements more than in any year since accounts had been kept; Mr. Tallack gave it as his opinion that the Society was never more healthy,

not even in the first years of its existence; J. Grubb believed that there was a considerable change for the better, both as regards public and private prayer. It is to be hoped such may turn out to be the case. The great characteristic testimony of the Friends, particularly against ecclesiastical pretensions on the one side and against religious forms on the other, is as much requisite now as ever; there is, as one of their official documents remarks, "a strong tendency in the human mind to substitute the form of religion for the power, and to satisfy the conscience by a cold compliance with exterior performances while the heart remains unchanged. And inasmuch as the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the communion of the body and blood of Christ, of which water baptism, and bread and wine, are admitted to be only signs, are not dependent on those outward ceremonies or necessarily connected with them, and are declared in Holy Scripture to be effectual to the salvation of the soul, which the signs are not, Friends have always believed it to be their place and duty to hold forth to the world a clear and decided testimony to the living substance—the spiritual work of Christ in the soul and a blessed communion with him there." Practically, in the promotion of temperance and

education, in the improvement of prisons and prison discipline, in the advocacy of universal peace and freedom, in philanthropy and charity, the Friends have ever led the way. For such ends they have freely sacrificed money and time, and energy and life itself; nor do they forget those of their own household, as it were; every poor Friend who may be unable to earn a livelihood usually receives aid from his brother members to the extent of 20*l.* to 40*l.* per annum (administered privately in general), according to age or infirmity. When the poorer Friends are out of a situation they are often helped to obtain employment by various arrangements under free registries, and by the aid of private inquiries for vacancies. In addition it may be remarked that a large number of charitable bequests and special funds have been bequeathed for the local or general benefit of the members of this religious community. The City of London owes much to Quakers, who in time past by their industry and self-denial laid the foundations of many of its noblest charities and its most princely mercantile establishments.

JONATHAN GRUBB AT THE AGRICULTURAL HALL.

Long, long ago the wise men came from the East,

and from the east of England has come to us a man wise, in the opinion of his friends, in the best wisdom. It is of Mr. Jonathan Grubb I write, who has been living in Sudbury for many years, and who for the last twelve or fourteen has almost entirely devoted himself to missionary work in various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. I think as a temperance lecturer he first came before the public. It was the sin of drunkenness which first led him to lecturing. He had seen the evils of intemperance; he had seen what poverty, what wretchedness and crime were its results; and much and deeply moved thereby he mounted the platform, which more or less ever since has been familiar with his name. While in Cornwall on one occasion he found an opportunity of talking on something else—on that common salvation without which, in the opinion of pious people, temperance itself is of little worth. The opportunity was one of great spiritual benefit, and ever since he has been engaged in what is called by the denomination to which he belongs—the denomination whose energetic and untiring philanthropy has been honoured all the world over—the denomination which, from the days of George Fox, has ever borne a silent protest against the frivolities of fashion and the vanities of life—

public preaching. In the opinion of those excellent people an ordinary minister is not a public preacher at all. They reserve that title exclusively for one who, like Mr. Grubb, goes out into the world, as it were, collects the crowds by the wayside, on the sea-shore, in the crowded street, and there, to those for whose souls few care, who otherwise would perish for lack of knowledge, proclaims that Gospel which tells how, for such as they, pardon can be secured and life and immortality brought to light. In our day no Friend is more extensively engaged in this work than Mr. Grubb. In all parts of Suffolk his labours have been many. In various districts of the metropolis he has been similarly engaged. He has also spent much time in Ireland—where he has been listened to and aided by Roman Catholic and Protestant alike. It was only on one occasion that he has ever been prevented from preaching by the intrusion of a mob, and that was (tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askalon) in no less ancient and respectable a borough than that of Bury St. Edmunds. In the filthiest and most depraved districts of London, in the very heart of Roman Catholic Ireland, he has never been interfered with at all. Of course some of this success is due to Mr. Grubb himself. With his

one aim to tell how sinners may be saved, he has been remarkably successful in avoiding collision with class feelings and sectarian animosities. His manner is also eminently kind and gentle; but after all does not his experience also show, what we have long believed, that honest, simple, faithful preaching is never exercised in vain? It may be also said that some of Mr. Grubb's qualifications are hereditary. By birth he is an Irishman (he comes from Tipperary), and his mother was an eminent Quakeress, and extensively useful in her day. It was a sermon from her that was the instrument, humanly speaking, in the conversion of one of the most respected of our open-air preachers in London at the present day. We take much from those to whom we owe our being. Why should we not also inherit some of their excellences? The question may be asked though not answered here.

But to return to Mr. Grubb. The last time I heard him he had a truly magnificent congregation at the Agricultural Hall, Islington. Mr. Thain Davidson's well meant effort to attract outsiders, and to keep up a large Sunday-afternoon service, now that the novelty of the thing has passed away, seems as successful as ever. He and his people have

lately moved into the new hall, a most commodious building, and right well do they fill it. It will be much to be regretted if this scheme fall through for want of funds. It appears much good has resulted from it. Not a week passes but cases occur in which it has been shown how awakening have been the addresses delivered. A service that only lasts an hour is a desideratum. No one could have listened to Mr. Grubb without feeling how his kind of address is pre-eminently adapted to encourage and stimulate the religious life, to arrest the attention of the impenitent, and to touch especially the hearts of the young. Mr. Grubb takes no text, preaches no formal sermon, aims at no rhetorical flight, does not strike you as being very intellectual, or very original, or very learned. It may be that he is all three—it certainly is not for me to say that he is not—but whether he be so or not, it is clear that he judges and judges rightly that, at the Agricultural Hall on a Sunday afternoon what is wanted is not the glare of the rhetorician, not the learning of the divine, not the elaborate argument of the trained logician, not the fancy of the poet, not the dramatic action of the elocutionist, but the tender beseeching of one who, saved by Divine mercy him-

self, and assured of all its fulness and omnipotence, would force a similar boon on all around. It was thus he preached on Sunday afternoon. ' He seemed to speak out of the depth of a holy love, in language very simple, abounding with the commonest, and, as some might think, most worn of Scripture quotations, yet with a pathos that, as it came from the heart, at once reached the hearts of all his hearers. A more homely or plainer-looking man than Mr. Grubb you don't often see. As he stood there, with his sunburnt, honest face, with his suit of sober black and grey, with his rustic air, you felt that his power (for there was not a single unattentive hearer) was such as a Whitefield or a Wesley wielded, and which has never been exerted in our world in vain. Man's fallen state, his need of pardon, his need of pardon now, the danger of delay, the duty of all instantly to receive the proffered grace—such were his themes. He told them he had stood by the death-bed of a woman who had believed that there was no mercy for such a wicked old sinner as she was, and had heard her song of joy as she passed from the poverty and sorrow of earth to the wealth and joy of heaven. Yes, for all there was mercy, and that all there present might attain it was his prayer; and as thus he

spoke, light came to his eye and animation to his voice, and, with uplifted arm and flowing utterance, he gave you his idea of the true evangelist—the man always needed in our land—and it is to be feared, in spite of all our boasted Christianity, never more than now. But it is not for me to say what are Mr. Grubb's peculiar qualifications for his work. What they are may be best gathered from his abundant labours. In his own denomination it is well known how numerous are his efforts and how great his successes. He is a fitting representative of active and spiritual Quakerism. Men say that body is not what it was; that it is losing its power; that it has little hold upon the people; that it makes no converts. It may be so, but if it has many such ministers as Mr. Grubb in its midst, as much as any it is fitted with a living ministry which will go out into the highways and hedges and bring back to the fold those who have wandered far away. His appeal is not to the high and mighty, to the rich, the learned, or the great, but to the poorest of the poor. Mr. Grubb's mission is evidently a special one. Amongst fallen women, in districts where ragged-schools and churches are required, in corners of our land where no regular means of grace exist, he finds

special charm and need. It is pleasant to see him supported by the good men and true of his own denomination and others. It is evident that at the Agricultural Hall—perhaps all the better for its not being professedly such—we have the true idea of an Evangelical Alliance, an alliance for Christian work rather than of Christian creed, an alliance pratical, not speculative, not in form and dogma, but in life and love.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MORAVIANS IN FETTER LANE.

WHAT virtue there is in an if. Without going as far back as the Book of Genesis, and thinking what a different thing life would have been if the mother of us all had not plucked and eaten

> "The fruit
> Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world and all our woe,"

it is very obvious much depends upon the ifs. If Sir Robert Peel had encouraged the advances of Disraeli, how different would have been the state of politics in this country. If Louis Philippe had shot Louis Napoleon when he had the power to do so, the Orleanists might have been the rulers of France. If old George III. had had brains as well as self-esteem and a stubborn will, what untold horrors might have been averted from England and Ireland. If Balthazar Gerard had not fired his pistol at William

the Silent, Belgium at this time would have been as intensely Protestant as it is now intensely Catholic. If John Wesley had perished in the fire at Epworth Parsonage, where would have been the Methodist Revival of the last century? And if Wesley himself had not broken from the little band who met in Fetter Lane, what sect in England would have equalled in numbers or usefulness that of the Moravians? Now, in this teeming London they have but one place of worship, and that but very indifferently filled. It does not even present the usual appearance of a place of worship, and thus attract notice; the stranger passes it by. Yet it is a place of surpassing interest, one of the hallowed spots of London, where sinners have wept, where souls have rejoiced, where the power and presence of God have been marvellously displayed. Let us go there; we pass along a passage till we come into a very old-fashioned meeting-house. There we shall find plenty of room. There are two hundred communicants, and at certain times they are all present, but they are scattered far and wide, and in general the place has a very deserted look. The benches—there are no pews—are most uncommonly hard to sit on. There are galleries, and in one of them there is an

organ. The place is neat and clean. The service itself calls for no especial notice. It is much like that of other denominations. The liturgy is exclusively that of the Moravians. The preaching is such as you may hear elsewhere. Attached to the place is a skeleton Sunday-school. There is light about the place, but it is not very powerful. It suggests more that of the setting than of the rising sun. I confess I see no reason why this should be the case, why the Moravianism, so powerful in many places, so blessed in missionary efforts, should be so powerless here. Moravianism is older than Lutheranism. It has an apostolical descent more genuine than that of the English or the Romish Church. Pre-eminently it may claim to have followed the leadings of Providence. Nowhere is there a trace of the gradual elaboration of any plan dictated by human wisdom. The leading men in the Ancient Unity, the emigrant founders of Herrnhut, Count Zinzendorf himself, and those of his fellow-labourers who were instrumental in introducing the Church into England, were all led gradually and by a way which they knew not to results they had not contemplated. As an anonymous writer, one of their body, remarks, "What a striking proof is here afforded of the

wisdom and faithfulness of God! Surely it well becomes the members of a community which has been so undeservedly favoured to inquire whether they, as individuals and collectively, have faithfully improved the privileges bestowed upon them."

But about the chapel. Turn to Baxter's Diary, and we find the place mentioned there. He writes: "On January the 24th, 1672-3, I began a Tuesday Lecture at Mr. Turner's church in New Street, near Fetter Lane, with great convenience and God's encouraging blessing." It is, writes Mr. Orme, that between Nevill's Court and New Street, now occupied by the Moravians. It appears to have existed, though perhaps in a different form, before the Fire of London. Turner, who was the first minister, was a very active man during the Plague. He was ejected from Sunbury, in Middlesex, and continued to preach in Fetter Lane till towards the end of the reign of Charles II., when he removed to Leather Lane. Baxter carried on the morning week-day lecture till the 24th of August, 1682. The church which then met in it was under the care of Mr. Lobb, whose predecessors had been Dr. Thomas Goodwin and Thankful Owen. This church still exists, but on the opposite side of the way, under the care of

the Rev. J. Spurgeon. The Moravians came into possession of the building in 1740. They had previously met in Fetter Lane, but in a smaller room. The present chapel was then known as the Great Meeting-house, or Bradbury's Meeting-house. Tradition says that the place was once used as a saw-pit, and as a place of asylum when the State Church was busy at the work in which it has ever been untiring, no matter how remiss in other matters—that of enforcing its rights real or fancied, and disregarding those of other men. Tradition also says that the place was built, for the same reason, with two modes of egress, that the good men in the pulpit might have an additional chance of safety. It was in the meeting that Emmanuel Swedenborg was for a time accustomed to worship. It was in the old place that Whitefield and Wesley attended, and where, as Southey writes, "they encouraged each other in excesses of devotion which, if they found the mind sane, were not likely long to leave it so," but of which Wesley writes in very different language. Let us hear what he says. "About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the

ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement we broke out with one voice, 'We praise Thee, O God! we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.'" "It was a Pentecostal season indeed," wrote Whitefield. Let me add that it was there, and not in the present meeting, that Wesley stood up and read from a written paper such of their doctrines as he contemned, especially that of there being no degrees of faith short of perfect assurance. He had learnt much from the Moravians. They had found him a mere Ritualist, they had left him a converted man, but he had outgrown his teachers, the mild and loving and placid Germans of Fetter Lane. "I have borne with you long," said he at the end of his discourse, hoping you would turn; but, as I find you more and more confirmed in the errors of your ways, nothing now remains but that I should give you up to God. You that are of the same judgment, follow me." When he had thus spoken he withdrew. This breach was never healed, and from that day to this Moravianism has never in this country, and especially in London, recovered from the blow.

It may also be said that the impulse given to the religious life of England by the Moravians has

tended naturally to their decrease. Their speciality was to preach the atonement made for sin by the blood of Jesus, and happiness in communion with Him. In the dark days, when they came over, this doctrine was far less commonly believed than now, and in proportion as it has been preached by Churchmen and Dissenters has there been a decline of Moravian influence. In reality, what they came here to do has been done by others who had learned how to do it from them. All Evangelical sects teach now what they teach, and even where they now break fresh ground it is found those whom they have influenced prefer to take part with churches of a more native origin or British character. As regards London the position of their chapel is very much against them. An out-of-the-way situation is as undesirable in a spiritual, as in a commercial point of view. In their church government they are Episcopalian, and meet at certain great occasions in synod. At one time they much favoured the lot, but now that is rarely used, and their marriages are not arranged by it as was formerly the case. A bishop is an elder appointed by the synod to ordain ministers of the church. The latter are sent to a congregation, but it exercises a veto. The congre-

gation is ruled by a committee chosen by the communicants. They claim not to be Dissenters; it was the opinion of Archbishop Potter they were not. They trace their pedigree from Zinzendorf to Huss, from Huss to the Greek monks, Theodorus and Cyril, who in the ninth century introduced Christianity into Moravia and Bohemia. But after all they chiefly glory in the fact of preaching, to use one of their own hymns—

> "That whoe'er believeth in Christ's redemption
> May find free grace and a complete exemption
> From serving sin."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SWEDENBORGIANS.

IF the reader be told that there exists in this enlightened age a sect who believe that the day of judgment is passed, that it took place nearly a hundred years ago, that the Christian dispensation is at an end, that Emmanuel Swedenborg daily visited the spiritual world, and made acquaintance with its inhabitants, that he was directly appointed by God to describe to men the scenery of heaven and hell, and the world of spirits, and the lives of their inhabitants, and that through him the Lord Jesus Christ makes his second advent for the institution of a new Church described in the Apocalypse under the figure of the New Jerusalem, at once you exclaim, this is "one of the things no fellah can understand." Nevertheless, such actually is the fact—nay more, it may be observed, that the number of Swedenborgians is on the increase; that they have a hundred chapels in England,

and a larger number in America, and that this sect, while it has excited the rude laugh of ignorant folly, has attracted to itself some of the greatest intellects of the day. Emerson claims for Swedenborg that he was a "colossal soul;" and Mr. Kingsley speaks of him, though not very correctly, as a "sound and severe and scientific labourer, to whom our modern physical science is most deeply indebted." The Swedenborgians, says Theodore Parker, have a calm and religious beauty in their lives, which is much to be admired. I should fancy the artist Blake was a Swedenborgian. Amongst the active Swedenborgians of the past I find such names as John Flaxman, sculptor; William Sharpe, engraver; the Rev. Joseph Gilpin, curate to Fletcher of Madely; and James Hindmarsh, one of Wesley's preachers; Charles Augustus Tulk, a friend of Joseph Hume, and M.P. for Sudbury in 1821; Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the spinning-mule, of whom it was truly remarked by his biographer, "Few men, perhaps, have ever conferred so great a benefit on their country and reaped so little profit for themselves." In our time Swedenborgianism was represented in Parliament by Mr. Richard Malins, now Sir Richard, and a Vice-Chancellor. Mr. Hiram Power, the American sculptor,

is a zealous missionary of the Swedenborgian faith. The chief of the living Swedenborgian literati in this country are Dr. Garth Wilkinson, and the Rev. Augustus Clissold, formerly of Exeter College, Oxford. Other well-known names in connexion with the sect are Mr. Isaac Pitman and Mr. George Hartly Grindon.

The Society shows signs of life. In Islington there is a college for the education of young men for the ministry. Mr. W. White, no friendly witness,—he was driven from the community on the question of spiritualism,—writes on the testimony of Her Majesty's inspectors :—"There are no better schools of their class in England than those maintained by the Swedenborgians of Manchester and Salford, in which about fourteen hundred children are educated." The Swedenborgians have besides a national missionary institution, with a very limited income, and two societies for the production of tracts, one in London and the other in Manchester. The London Missionary and Tract Society of the New Church had in 1865 an income of 209*l.*, and circulated 32,000 tracts. The Manchester New Jerusalem Tract Society had the same year an income of 154*l.*, and circulated 100,000 tracts; their chief society is that for printing

and publishing the writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg, established in London in the year 1810. "For half a century," writes Mr. White, "this society was the happy meeting place of all who had any lively interest in Swedenborg, whether citizens of Hindmarsh's New Jerusalem, or Churchmen like Clowes, or Quakers like Harrison, or unattached like Tulk." In 1845 the Swedenborg Association was formed in London to promote the sale of Swedenborg's writings, which were translated by Dr. Wilkinson, the Rev. Augustus Clissold, and Mr. Strull. In 1854 it was thought advisable that the Society should establish a book depôt of its own. Accordingly the Rev. Augustus Clissold subscribed 3000*l.* for the purchase of suitable premises. A house was taken in Bloomsbury Street. In 1865 there were 3016 volumes disposed of, valued at 217*l.*, and the income of the Society from subscriptions and donations was in that year 205*l.* The operations of the Society are not, however, confined to its sales. Swedenborg's works are kept in print, and often are given away to libraries and to persons of eminence at home and abroad. It does not appear that Swedenborg's writings have ever been very popular. The first volume of the "Arcana Cœlestia" was published in 1749, and was completed

in 1756, in eight quartos. The book fell stillborn from the press. In his "Spiritual Diary" Swedenborg describes the fact, and thus accounts for it:—"I have received letters informing me that not more than four copies have been sold in the space of two months. I communicated this to the angels. They were surprised, but they said it must be left to the Lord's providence; that His providence is of such a nature that it compels no one; and that it is not fitting others should read the 'Arcana Cœlestia' before those who are in the faith."

I hasten on to finish what I have to say as to the Swedenborg organization. There are many of his admirers who believe that the attempt to form a separate sect was not a wise one; certainly Swedenborg himself did nothing of the kind. Fletcher of Madely, who read "Heaven and Hell," and used to declare that he regarded Swedenborg's writings "as a magnificent feast set out with many dainties, but that he had not an appetite for every dish," when asked why he did not preach the new doctrines, candidly confessed, "Because my congregation is not in a fit state to receive them;" and so, in the opinion of many, people might be Swedenborgians, as members of other churches, without setting up a new denomi-

nation. Such was the opinion of the chief apostle of Swedenborgianism in England, the Rev. John Clowes, for the extraordinary term of sixty-two years rector of St. John's, Manchester. A complaint was laid before his Bishop, Dr. Porteus, charging him with the denial of the Trinity and the Atonement, and with holding heretical opinions. The Bishop summoned him to Chester, "read to him the several charges, heard patiently his reply to each, made his remarks (which discovered plainly that he was by no means dissatisfied or displeased with his opinions), and dismissed him with a friendly caution to be on his guard against his adversaries, who seemed disposed to do him mischief." And no wonder. Swedenborg took almost as great liberties with the Pentateuch as Bishop Colenso himself.

Robert Hindmarsh, a printer, in Clerkenwell Close, the founder of the sect of "the New Church signified by New Jerusalem in the Revelation," was not of the same way of thinking as Clowes or Fletcher. In 1783 he held meetings at his own house; he had an audience of two. In 1784 he was joined by others; chambers were rented in New Court, Middle Temple, under the title of "The Theosophical Society, insti-

tuted for the purpose of promoting the heavenly doctrine of the New Jerusalem, by translating, printing, and publishing the Theological Writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg." Meetings were held on Sundays and Thursdays, at which portions of Swedenborg's writings were read and discussed. In 1787 a chapel was opened at Great Eastcheap. In 1797 Proud came to Cross Street, Hatton Garden, a place built expressly for him; and very large congregations for some years attended on his ministry. In time the chapel became deserted, the preacher ceased to draw. In 1812 it was sold to the managers of the Caledonian Asylum, and then for a time Irving blazed in it, the comet of a season; and then once more it came back to the Swedenborgians; and now, at any rate of a Sunday night, it is a sad, lonely spot. Proud was succeeded by Noble, an engraver, who commenced his ministry in 1819, and continued it till 1853, when he closed it by his death in his seventy-fifth year. One of the blessings promised in the Old Testament to those who keep the Commandments seems to be pre-eminently enjoyed by the Swedenborgians, and that is length of days. Swedenborg himself lived to be eighty-four.

From the Wesleyans the Swedenborgians got the

idea of a conference which was to govern the new Church. As represented in conference, the Swedenborgians form a congregation of 3605 members, divided into fifty-five societies. In London there are four societies, containing, says Mr. White, 566 members. In 1807 one was held, at which they decreed no one should act as minister who had not received their ordination, and recommended all who would enter the New Jerusalem to receive baptism at their hands. Since 1815, conferences have been held regularly in various towns. Conference has for its organ the *Intellectual Repository and New Jerusalem Magazine.*

The faith of the new Church is briefly this:—

"That there is one eternal, self-existent God, who is Infinite Love and Wisdom, the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

"In the fulness of time and for the redemption of man, He took upon Him human nature by birth of a virgin, and became God manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

"The Lord Jesus Christ is the one only true object of Christian faith and worship, and in Him is centred the Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The divinity of the Father being the soul of the Son, and the humanity of the Son being the body of the

Father, whence proceeds the Holy Spirit to regenerate and save mankind.

"The Lord became our Redeemer by subduing the infernal hosts, and glorifying His humanity, without which no man could have been saved, and by which all men are capable of being saved by belief in Him; such belief implying a faithful obedience to the Divine laws, as the means of receiving the gifts of salvation.

"The Sacred Scripture is the Word of God, and contains within its external or literal sense an internal or spiritual sense, being thus Divine.

"On the death of the natural body, man rises again in a spiritual body, and according to the quality of his life here, lives in happiness or in misery hereafter.

"Now is the time of the Lord's second coming, not in person, but in the power and great glory of His Holy Word, to establish a new and permanent Church, testified in the Revelation by the holy city—New Jerûsalem descending from God out of heaven."

As a philosophy Swedenborgianism is the exact opposite of Materialism. Everything in nature, Swedenborg tells us, exists first in spirit. "We are created by the Lord, so that during our life in the body we may converse with spirits and angels, as indeed was the habit of the people of the most ancient times." During his worldly life "he (man) is not

seen in spirit, because he is immersed in nature." God is in everything—is the life of everything. In heaven all is love—in hell all is selfishness. There is besides a spiritual world.

There are four Swedenborgian congregations in London. The principal one is that in Argyle Square, King's Cross, at which preaches the Rev. Dr. Bayley —a tall, pleasant gentleman, in the prime of life. Outside, the place presents the appearance of a well-built, superior sort of chapel; inside, the massive pillars give it almost a cathedral appearance. It holds about 700 people; there are no galleries, and it is generally well filled. The people have a respectable appearance, and some of them have arrived at the dignity of "carriage folk." The preacher is attentively listened to, and if passages of Scripture are referred to in the course of the sermon, there is at once an appeal to innumerable Bibles. There is service twice a day; and in the afternoon there is a conversation class, at which the Sunday-school teachers meet and take tea together. In the course of the week there is a theological class; and then, in connexion with the chapel, there are societies of a friendly and philanthropic character; there is also a lending library, and a day as well as a Sunday school.

At either school the average attendance is the same —about three hundred.

At the far end, as you enter, there are two desks or pulpits, one for the minister and another for the assistant reader. The minister is in the one on the right-hand side. Between them is the communion-table. Both the minister and the assistant are dressed alike, in white robes—typical, we may suppose, of the doctrine and the life.

The service begins with a hymn, followed by certain passages from the Bible, in which all the congregation join, with the help of an efficient organ and choir. Then the minister reads, while the congregation kneel, a prayer of confession and supplication, ending with a prayer to "our Father who art in the *heavens*." Then the congregation stand while the minister reads the Ten Commandments or the Beatitudes. Again passages from the Psalms are sung, and there is another prayer, varied according to its being the first, or second, or third, or fourth Sunday—a variation deserving to be imitated if ever we have a reformed Book of Common Prayer. In these prayers there is a scrupulous avoidance of evangelical formulas. Of course we hear nothing of the blood of Christ to wash away the stain of sin;

and if terms are used common to other denominations, they are carefully toned down. Instead, praise and adoration are offered "for the establishment of a church upon earth as the means of raising us to heaven, and may it be increasingly receptive of those exalted principles which constitute Thy spiritual Zion; and may it speedily advance to that glorious state which is the subject of prophetic promise. Grant that the holy city, New Jerusalem, descending from Thee out of heaven, may be more and more extensively welcomed; and that all who are enabled to perceive its heavenly nature may show forth the knowledge of Thy truth by a life in agreement with its dictates." Hymns, more philosophical than theological, are sung, and sacred anthems. No reference is made to other churches, or to other bodies of Christians. Amongst the special services we find Christ is thanked for His victory over the *hells*." God is, we are told, one in essence and in person; and in Him is the Divine Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The partaker of "the Holy Supper," as it is called, is required "to acknowledge that the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the only God of heaven, and that His humanity is divine." In the Marriage Service we are told, "Love truly conjugal is the

union of two minds, which is a spiritual union, and all spiritual union descends from heaven. Hence love truly conjugal comes from heaven, and its origin, from the marriage of goodness and truth there." But while we have been looking through the liturgy, the preacher has read a short prayer, and has commenced his sermon, the text of which, you may be sure, is taken from the Old Testament. Let us listen. I have said it is sure to be taken from the Old Testament. The reason is, Swedenborg rejects the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, or, rather, declares that they have no "internal sense."

Once upon a time, as the story goes, an aged minister was asked the reason why he abounded in expositions in preference to regular sermons. His reply was, because when he was persecuted in one text he could flee unto another. Swedenborgian preachers need no such excuse. According to their master, Scripture has a threefold sense—*the celestial*, *the spiritual*, and *the literal* or natural. In this Swedenborg was not original. He recognised a threefold sense in Scripture corresponding to the threefold nature of man—as body, soul, and spirit. This idea was undoubtedly suggested to him by the threefold division of mankind according to the Gnostic

system. "The *celestial* sense," writes the Rev. Mr. Clowes, "according to Baron Swedenborg, involves in it whatsoever relates to the Divine love, and whatsoever has a tendency to excite that love in the will and affections of the devout reader. The spiritual sense, again, involves in it whatsoever relates to the Divine wisdom, and whatsoever is communicative of that wisdom to the devout reader's understanding and thought. And lastly, the natural or literal sense involves in it whatsoever relates to the expressions of the Divine love and wisdom, and is best adapted to convey those heavenly principles to the reader's mind, and to impress them on his life." According to this method, then, the Swedenborgian has a fulness and a liberty which, in the pulpit, should give him a power of amplification denied to those whose Biblical exegesis is of a more old-fashioned character. If, for instance, as Swedenborg says, the history of the Creation in Genesis means the rise of the most ancient church—if by Noah is meant the ancient church in general—if Shem typifies true internal worship, Ham corrupt internal worship, Japheth true external worship, and Canaan corrupt external worship—it seems to such as the writer the Swedenborgian preacher may do what he likes, and in his flights of rhetoric may leave

his brethren of other denominations far behind. Take, for instance, the plague of frogs. An ordinary preacher could make but little of it; but a Swedenborgian will tell you that frogs mean false doctrines, and then what room you have for expansion! Again, if I take the word Egypt in the Old Testament to mean the "natural principle," how much more can I say than he who means by Egypt—Egypt and nothing else! At the same time this very liberty seems to hamper and confine the Swedenborgians. There is something narrow and pedantic about their preaching. As Swedenborg studied the Bible and read no other book, so they seem to confine themselves exclusively to Swedenborg; and as they have none of them his genius, or his fulness, or his power, the result is something very far-fetched and tame and second-hand. You feel that in accordance with their own system of interpretation they might do much more than they actually do. "It is unquestionably true," however (writes Mr. George Bush, late Professor of Hebrew in the University of New York), "that the piety inculcated by the doctrines of the New Church is of a more genial and cheerful stamp than that which is usually found under the auspices of the prevailing creeds, because the doctrines impart a higher and

sublimer view of the infinite love and benignity of the Lord towards the human race, as willing the salvation of all, and ordering every event of His providence with a view to eternal ends of mercy in regard to each individual, and incessantly aiming to withhold him from hell, so far as it can 'be done consistently with his moral freedom.'" When Tennyson writes:—

"Behold we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last to all,
And every winter change to spring.

"That nothing walks with aimless feet,
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete"—

he merely reproduces Swedenborgianism. Again, the Swedenborgians claim for their system an active philanthropy superior to that of any other sect. If heaven and hell are in us—if, as we develop the good we arrive at heaven, or as we develop the bad we sink into a deeper hell—no sects have greater provocatives to a godly life, and we might expect in their preaching a glowing sympathy with human right and popular progress, which assuredly in their pulpits in England finds but little utterance. Swedenborg teaches, in the strongest manner, that no

man can lead a spiritual life apart from civil and moral life. Again and again he argues that the life which leads to heaven "is not a life of retirement from the world, but of action in the world. A life of charity, which consists in acting sincerely and justly in every situation, engagement, and work, in obedience to the Divine law, is not difficult; but a life of piety alone is difficult, and such a pious life leads away from heaven as much as it is vulgarly believed to lead to heaven." The Christianity of his day he proclaims again and again to be worthless. It was founded on opinion, not on conduct. He who believes otherwise than the Church teaches is cast out of its communion; "but he who thieves, if he does not do so flagrantly, lies, betrays, and commits adultery, if only he frequents a place of worship and talks piously, passes as a religious man." When a great abuse has to be attacked—when a hoary wrong in Church and State has to be swept away—when help is to be given to the wretched and the perishing, have we ever seen the Swedenborgian minister coming to the front as a leader? On the contrary, you will find him in his New Jerusalem ignoring humanity altogether, and torturing with tedious complacency Genesis and Revelation

alike. If I were a preacher of any denomination, I would have Swedenborg's works by me. They should be the fruitful source of many an argument to illustrate or arouse; but if in the future the pulpit is to maintain its place and power, the Swedenborgians, unless they turn over a new leaf, must retire into the background. Look at Cross Street, Hatton Garden, for instance, on a Sunday night; you will not find thirty people there; yet it stands in the midst of a teeming population, where the devil preaches to a crowded congregation every day and every hour. Let it not be supposed, however, that Swedenborgianism is perishing for lack of new blood. It was only a few days since I heard of a clergyman of the Church of England, who had resigned his living in consequence of his joining the Swedenborgians. Of the fancies of Swedenborg let me say there are those to whom they suggest much—reveal much. According to the man's own statement, he was sent from God, and saw and revealed the secrets of the invisible world. Sometimes his revelations are very indecorous. Here is one. "Spiritual angels dislike butter, which was made clear to me from this circumstance: that although I am fond of butter I did not for a long while, even for some months,

desire any, and during which time I was in association with them; and when I had tasted butter I found it had lost the pleasant flavour it once had to me. That the spiritual angels caused this aversion was plain from the fact that when a celestial angel was with me, and I was impelled to eat some good butter, the spiritual angels caused an odour of butter to rise from my mouth to my nostrils by way of reproach; still, however, they are much delighted with milk, and when I partook of some the relish was more grateful than I can describe. Milk belongs to the spiritual, as butter does to the celestial angels—not that they delight therein as food, but on account of their correspondence." I should have said Swedenborg divides all angels into two orders—the celestial angels are the angels of love or the will, the spiritual angels are those of truth or the intellect. Angels, according to Swedenborg, are poor guides in worldly matters; "they only regard the good intention, and can be adduced to affirm anything which promises to advance it."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE IRVINGITES, OR APOSTOLICAL CHURCH.

IF the absence of brotherly love for religious people, if a scorn of all who worship God different from themselves, constitute heresy—and surely the Apostle John shows that it does very clearly—then there are no such heretics in London as the Irvingites, who worship in a very magnificent cathedral in Gordon Square. Irving, I imagine, with all his genius, had a very uncatholic spirit. Take, for instance, his celebrated missionary sermon. Requested by the directors of the London Missionary Society to preach the annual sermon at Surrey Chapel — how did he begin?

When he ascended the pulpit he entered on a kind of audible soliloquy. Said he, "How shall I encourage myself to address the thronging multitude by whom I am surrounded? I will even cast about for a few examples. There are three of a

notable character which now strike me: that of the Apostle Paul preaching before the Jewish Sanhedrim, that of Bernard Gilpin preaching before the Court of King Edward VI., and that of a Scottish Divine preaching before the Commissioner of the General Assembly. On these three examples, as on a sacred tripod, I feel my spirit propped; but especially the last, the Scottish Divine preaching before the Commissioner of the General Assembly. If he could venture to encounter the hoary-headed eldership and substantial theology of the North, surely I may, without fear, address myself to the flimsy evangelism of the South." In this kind and flattering way did Irving speak of the great body of English Dissenters.

Of the Irvingite Church, the late Drummond, the banker, M.P. for Surrey, was also an elder, and the same spirit lent bitterness to his sarcastic and biting tongue. It was a treat to see and hear him, especially when the topic was at all theological. Irving describes Drummond as one "who hath taken us poor despised interpreters of prophecy under your wing, and made the walls of your house like unto the ancient schools of the prophets." But out of his own house Drummond seemed to have taken little

else or nothing under his wing. His mission apparently was to preach that in nothing was there anything—that we were all whited sepulchres. The Egyptians placed a skeleton at their feasts to remind them of their mortality. The Sultan Saladin, it is said, had a similar message dinned daily into his ears by a herald especially appointed to that purpose. Mr. Drummond voluntarily took that duty on himself. In his eye we were all morally dead; all virtue was gone clean out of us; the Church was in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death. Nor had Dissent one ray more of Gospel light. Under the mask of patriotism he saw the grovelling soul of the placeman; in the love of liberty the desire of licence; in the rulers of the land a lamentable lack of understanding; in the people a blind, senseless, untaught mass. Drummond was such a one as Tennyson describes:—

> "Thou shalt not be saved by works;
> Thou hast been a sinner too.
> Ruined trunks on wither'd forks,
> Empty scarecrows I and you."

Thus did he perorate with the thinnest of voices, and gentlest manner, to a House of which, for many sessions, he was the delight and puzzle, all the while he was a member of the Irvingite Church.

A great claim is set up by this Church. Like Aaron's rod, it is to swallow up all the rest. So great is its hatred of sects, it forms a new one. While calling itself the holy and Apostolic Church, it makes no exclusive claim to the title. It acknowledges it to be the common title of the one Church baptized unto Christ. It claims to be no body of separatists from the Church of England. The members recognise the continuance of that Church from the days of the Apostles, and of the three orders, bishops, priests, and deacons, by succession from the Apostles. They have no sympathy with Dissent in any of its forms. That is schism, and is to be condemned accordingly. They meet in separate congregations, but they are not open to the charge of schism, on the ground of their meeting being permitted and authorized, so they say, by an ordinance of paramount authority which they believe God has restored for the benefit of the Church. At once their ecclesiasticism strikes the most superficial observer; the idea of the Church, that it is a mere assembly of believers, is rejected by them on every occasion and in every way. Their great glory is that the Apostolical order exists and is manifested in them.

Their special teaching is something more. It is

often asked, Are the days of Pentecost gone never to return? Have miracles ceased from among men? Cannot signs and wonders be still wrought by the Holy Ghost? As a rule, the Church answers this question in the negative. It teaches that the age of miracles is past; that they are no longer necessary; that in the fulness of time the Divine will was made known to man; and that the Church needs not now the signs and wonders by which that revelation was attested and declared. A large, or rather an active body, some few years ago sprang up in Scotland, crossed the Border, and extended to England, and enrolled amongst their members many in what may be termed an influential position in life. Enter their churches, and you learn, according to them, the gift of tongues still exists, signs and wonders are still manifested to the faithful, miracles are still wrought by those upon whom God has conferred the gift. Still, as much as in Apostolic times, does the Divine afflatus dwell in man, and the man so endowed becomes a prophet, and declares the will of God. "The doctrine of Christ's reign upon earth was at first," says Gibbon, "treated as profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length regarded as the absurd

invention of heresy and fanaticism." A similar process has been in operation with regard to the power of working miracles and speaking in unknown tongues. Against this process the Irvingite or Catholic Church is a living protest.

It is now many years since a magnificent Gothic cathedral was commenced in the corner of Gordon Square, between what at one time was Coward College and the handsome building erected by the Unitarians, and known as University Hall. Architecturally the new church may take high rank. The cathedral, still unfinished, is perhaps the most extensive modern work of the kind that has been undertaken. The Early English style has been adopted generally for the exterior, but inside the style of the roof and stone carvings is Decorated. The flat ceiling of the aisles, with rich traceried bosses and spandrels, is very effective. The ornament throughout, of which there is a considerable quantity, displays careful design. Indeed, in the opinion of competent critics the execution could not be surpassed. There are daily services in the church; on Sunday there are four. In the evening there is a sermon addressed to strangers. It may be added here that, under the title of Catholic Apostolic churches, there

are in all seven buildings registered in London. To each, I believe, appertain an evangelist, an apostle, a prophet, and an angel; and as each officer is peculiarly distinguished by his dress, in the cathedral in Gordon Square an effect is sometimes produced almost as scenic as any in a Roman Catholic cathedral. There are chairs for some, and benches for others; as much as possible they come and go in procession. All that is wanted to make you believe that you are in a Roman Catholic place of worship is a little incense, a few more banners, a little more life in the pulpit, and, above all, the presence of considerable numbers of the poorest of the poor. Here, indeed, the resemblance fails; there are no poor, comparatively speaking. Every one is distressingly genteel; and I could swear more than once when I have been present, the preacher, so fashionable has been his lisp, has been, if not Lord Dundreary himself, at any rate his own "brother Thwam." The hearers must be wealthy and liberal—the service of the church, and the church, all indicate this.

I do not here enter into the question how far Church authority extends, whether apostolical gifts are to be looked for in our day rather than the apostolic spirit. I am not even definitely able to sum up the teaching

of the lights of Gordon Square. They avoid putting their doctrines in print—and seem to seek to make converts by sly insinuation rather than by open statement. All I can say is—and any outsider can see it—that with apostolic pretensions these men avoid every appearance of apostolical simplicity. They must meet not in an upper room, but in a gorgeous cathedral, where they must clothe themselves in every variety of ecclesiastical millinery, and appeal to the senses, to the eye and to the ear, rather than to the brain or heart. Thus is it, when genius fails, men have recourse to art. Irving would preach for hours to enraptured audiences. The church has no Irving now, but rejoices instead in mosaic pavement, fine music, man millinery, and elaborate ceremonial.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FREE CHRISTIAN UNION.

MANY professedly Christian people, and many who are in no way such, have long been of opinion that there is something that is wrong about our present religious organizations; that they tend to separate rather than unite; that what society requires is not dogmatic theology, but freer Christian union. Rightly or wrongly—and that is a question not to be discussed now—this idea has led to the formation of the society whose title heads this article. In June last year the first practical attempt was made towards the formation of such a society. In the winter previous the basis of union was agreed on, and in the month referred to the anniversary was held in Freemasons' Hall. Believing that in the vain pursuit of orthodoxy men have parted into rival churches, and lost the bond of common work and love; that doctrinal uniformity is become increasingly difficult,

while at the same time there is a growing and a strengthening of moral and spiritual affinities; that the Divine will is love to God and love to man, and that equally broad should be the terms of pious communion among men, the new Union requires a spiritual fellowship co-extensive with these terms, and aims by relieving the Christian life from reliance on theological articles or external rites to save it from conflict with the knowledge and conscience of mankind, and bring it back to the essential conditions of harmony between God and man. The Society proposes to issue publications to illustrate the spirit of unsectarian Christianity, and to furnish the means of undogmatic instruction; to give aid to persons suffering for conscience sake from the spirit of exclusiveness; to watch legislation so far as it bears on religious freedom; to help existing sects to widen their basis, and to encourage the formation of congregations where the terms of communion shall be broad and undogmatic. Further, it aims at the establishment in London of a central church for the maintenance of Christian worship and life, apart from doctrinal interests and names, the services of which will be conducted by ministers of various ecclesiastical positions. Amongst the committee of this Union

may be noted the names of George Dawson, Esq., the Rev. J. Martineau, and the Rev. W. Miall. The Rev. P. W. Clayden is one of the secretaries.

To the promoters of this new religious organization the attendance the first night must have been eminently gratifying. The large hall was well filled, and outside there were as many cabs and private broughams waiting about as at the Opera when a star of the first magnitude is engaged. On the occasion there was a special form of prayer devised, which was read by the Rev. Mr. Martineau, and two hymns were sung, one of Wesley's—

> "The saints on earth and those above
> But one communion make."

And another from the Breviary—

> "Supreme Disposer of the heart,
> Thou, since the world began,
> With heavenly grace hast sanctified
> And cheered the heart of man."

Besides there was a chant, in which all joined, and a small band to sing the Amen. Two sermons were preached; one by the Rev. Athanase Coquerel, the far-famed leader of the section of the Reformed Church of France which does not sympathize with orthodoxy. In the personal appearance of this celebrated preacher

there was little that was heretical or foreign. With his round face and stout frame you might have taken him for one of the sleekest of Anglican divines. Nevertheless his sermon was French in its construction and style of delivery and emphasis. His text was—"One thing is needful." His argument went to show that that one thing needful was the love of God, and that forms of faith and ritualism were so many hills in our way, which blinded the view and impeded our appreciation of this grand fundamental truth. The discourse, which lasted half an hour, over, the Rev. W. Miall engaged in extemporaneous prayer, in which there was a special reference to the death of the Rev. Mr. Tayler, of Hampstead, one of the committee of the Union, and a Professor of Manchester New College, London; and then came the Rev. C. Kegan Paul, Rector of Upminster, in Dorsetshire, with another sermon. It is scarce necessary to observe that Mr. Paul—a fine, tall, muscular man in the prime of life, with a black beard and with a voice almost as sonorous (a Frenchman's lungs always seem better than an Englishman's) as Pastor Coquerel himself—is a man much distinguished by collegiate success and Eton fame, and that his sermon evinced high intellectual culture. His text was, "He is not

here, but is risen," and his aim was to show how men seek the dead Christ rather than the living one. The Reformation was an attempt to get rid of ritualism and formalism, and now again it is felt that religion can no longer be confined in an article. It is not only the Bible we must consult, God has written His Word in life and humanity. They were not Theists; Christ was a name symbolical of humanity, and they were, as a matter of fact, Christian men. Nor would they get rid of Christian phraseology as long as the feeling of the heart clothes itself in language hallowed by the use of ages. A change is passing over society, and we have now to study religion in connexion with nature, science, progress, life. Still, nothing that has nourished the soul of man can die. All that has been is a part of what is to come, and sustained by this truth we are not to faint or fail. And then came the benediction, and ministers and people went home. In this Church of the future, as it aims to be, it is clear there will be nothing derogatory to the ministerial office. The committee were seated in various parts of the hall, while the ministers in black gowns occupied the platform. Apparently never in Freemasons' Hall had there met there men more spiritual and anxious for Divine guidance, and devout.

As to the issue of it all we can safely and reverently wait.

There are two sides to every picture—two aspects, at the least, in which human schemes and organizations may be viewed. On the first night, as regards the Free Christian Union, we had the one view which must have cheered its promoters; on the next, when the business meeting was held, when we were told of what the Society had done and what it was going to do, an element of a very different character appeared. In this great capital, at this season of the year, when London is crowded with notabilities, the managers had to go to Cambridge for a young man to preside, who had—we say it respectfully—really a physical disqualification for the office. Then there was a very young gentleman, quite unknown to fame, called on to second a resolution, and forced on to the platform from the body of the hall to say that and nothing more. As a matter of fact, the Society had enrolled, we believe, a couple of congregations, and voted a grant of 5*l.* to the Free Christian Church at Lynn. Nevertheless, with a platform on which few men save those connected with the Unitarian denomination appeared, and with but little response even from that body, the Society aims to influence the

public mind, especially by the press, by the publication of essays on the connexion between scientific theology and pure religion, the Bible as literature, dogma, prophecy, miracles, the possibility of a national formula of public devotion, the ethics of conformity, the place of religion in education, the limits of State action in ecclesiastical organizations. In some quarters it was evident that the feeling was that the Society had better aim at some practical work, such as the reconstruction of the National Church on the bases laid down in its own preamble; and one speaker, forgetful of the fact that the Church of Rome denied the right of private judgment in matters of religion *in toto*, asked whether any effort had been made to secure its sympathy and co-operation. It says little for the meeting that such a puerile question was politely received. As to speaking, indeed, the meeting was a failure, or would have been had it not been for the presence of Athanase Coquerel, who spoke in English at great length with the utmost freedom and warmth, and who had much to say of his own struggles on behalf of Free Christianity in France, of universal interest.

It appears in its early days the Protestant Church of France was entirely exclusive, and its confession

of faith was drawn up by Calvin and Beza. One of its forty articles decreed that the sword had been put by God into the hands of reigning princes, magistrates, &c., not only to enforce obedience to the second table of the Ten Commandments, but also to the first. Another article implied that little children, even unborn babes, are condemned to eternal perdition in hell; and if they die without baptism can in no way whatever be saved. By-and-by a little more elasticity was imported into this creed, and the Liberal party continued to live, even when, as in 1685, Louis XIV. shut up all the Protestant academies in France. An English writer had truly remarked that no Church had suffered so long and so much from persecution as the Reformed Church in France, and he was right—the last pastor who was hung in Paris suffered that penalty only as recently as the year 1762. A young pastor preaching at Nismes had for one of his hearers Lafayette, and he and Lafayette got from Louis XVI., in 1787, an edict that gave the French Protestants civil rights, and since then the Church has revived, but at the same time it has steadily and consistently refused to re-enact the old rigid creed. At present there were two parties in the Church, one orthodox the other Liberal. In the Church at Paris,

consisting of bankers, with whom Guizot always acted, the Consistory is orthodox. That Consistory was formed in 1802 by Napoleon, who selected for that purpose the twelve persons most wealthy. In 1848 this Consistory was re-elected by universal suffrage, and this was the cause of great changes. The ultra-Conservative feeling of the day retained the old set in office, and they, feeling themselves invested with additional power, began that persecution of M. Coquerel's father which continued till the last hour of his life. Of that persecution he, the speaker, had his share, and at last to support him the Union Protestante Libérale was formed. In a little while after he had spoken, to a certain extent favourably, of Renan's work, he was excluded from the Church, and M. Martin Paschaud as well. As to himself he had obtained leave with two young ministers to commence preaching in a hired room. At the same time, as they had not been legally ejected from the Church, they can baptize, marry, perform funeral services—in short, do everything but preach. In conclusion, the speaker said how rejoiced he was to find in England an attempt made to establish such a Society. It was the want of the time, and long he trusted might they continue to uphold the banner of peace and love.

It is clear, outside the meeting at Freemasons' Hall the idea is entertained that this was simply a Unitarian movement. Evidently such is the feeling of leading Unitarians themselves. One of them, the Rev. Mr. Ierson, who preaches in a beautiful and costly chapel in Islington, to a congregation that does not half fill the place, evidently so regards it. After the annual meeting, from the text, "Blessed are the peacemakers," he preached a sermon on behalf of the new organization. He was delighted with what had been done. In the devotional service he had witnessed more life than he had ever seen in a Unitarian service before, and he was thankful for it. At the same time Mr. Ierson expressed his regret that the movement did not aim to accomplish something more, and also regretted that it did not succeed in enrolling beneath its banner men of sufficiently diverse sentiments. This was not difficult to account for, continued the reverend gentleman. The Independent Churches, meaning by that term Baptists and Congregationalists, have great fear of each other. The ministers are afraid of the people, who look well after them. In many places, if a man shakes hands with a Unitarian he is straightway denounced as a Unitarian himself. Nor was this altogether wrong. The real fact was

that it would be found, directly any one approximated in civility to the Unitarians, he had either given up the doctrine of eternal damnation or some of the other dogmas of his body, and was not completely, and in the old-fashioned sense of the term, orthodox. Meanwhile the duty of the Unitarians was very obvious. They had to be more than ever charitable and deferential to all Christians, whatever their denomination. It was something to get men to respect each other, to believe each other to be honest, however they differed in faith and dogma. In his own opinion the Free Christian Union would have had a better chance had it been originated by another body of religionists. Even as regarded themselves he feared many of them were not sufficiently educated up to the mark; but at any rate it was something for the Unitarians to be associated with such a catholic and Christian union.

One word more may be said. At the business meeting one of the speakers was the Rev. Leigh Mann. Distinctly he avowed a belief the reverse of Unitarianism, and distinctly he glorified the association as one in which men of the most opposite dogmas could meet. In such an utterance we have an indication,

how significant or eccentric time alone can tell. At any rate, while confessing that hitherto there has been little of Christian union founded on dogma, we may anxiously ask, is there a better chance if the common bond be work?

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE LONDON ECCLESIA.

IN the independent way, Baxter, describing the Westminster Assembly of Divines, says, "I disliked many things." After mentioning what those things were—their making too light of ordination, their unnecessary and unscriptural strictness about the qualification of church members—he adds, "I disliked also the lamentable tendency of this their way to divisions and subdivisions and the nourishing of heresies and sects." The soul of the good man was wearied, as well it might be, with these differences, so trifling yet so fiercely discussed, with this waste of power, with this spirit of wrangling and contention, with these quarrels of Christian with Christian, when the world was only to be made better, and the true Church only to be built up, by a holy life. In our time the tendency of some minds to fly off into fresh sects is greater, perhaps, than ever. In one street

you see a placard up stating that here the Gospel is preached, and nowhere else. A good man says he is weary of all this sectarianism, and at once hires a room and starts a new sect. A man's conscience is too sensitive to allow him to worship with a one-man ministry, or with any existing denomination. He shakes his head, and mourns over their worldliness, their carnality, their want of spiritual life; but does he better it by standing aloof, by shutting himself up with a few dismal-minded people, who come with their Bibles, and see in them, not what sound scholarly criticism teaches, but that which their own morbid fancy suggests? As men of the world, these things are to be looked at practically, and by the light of common sense. Here are certain religious agencies at work—by them people are being strengthened in the Christian life, trained to Christian work, in their way promoting the welfare of man, and glorifying God. I may affect a superior piety, I may refuse to associate with common Christians, I may leave them; but what is the result? That as far as I can I put hindrances in their way. Ignorant people look up to me as a saint, and the church and the minister where I have any influence are to the extent of that influence damaged. A gentleman

writes to me—"Those who now represent the London Ecclesia, in recognition of the constitution and order of its organization, are, in this metropolis, myself and three others;" and then quotes—"'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.'" It is in Peckham this new religious body meets. At such meetings they do not admit strangers, in fulfilment of the ordinance of the Lord which enjoins us to assemble "ourselves together to worship God in spirit and in truth," and commands us—"If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine (the doctrine of the Christ), receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

For the doctrines of this new sect I must refer the inquirer to a pamphlet published at 22, Paternoster Row, called "The Truth as it is in Jesus, defined in the Constitution and Order of the London Ecclesia, or immersed believers of the things of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." In this pamphlet we have a summary of the faith delivered to the saints contrasted with the erroneous dogmas of popular theology, and also the apostolic rules for an ecclesiastical organization. In America, and many parts of England, Ecclesias, as they call them, exist.

The document to which they subscribe their names is an exceedingly lengthy one, nor is it very intelligible. I should say that wherein they differ from other Christians in point of doctrine is this, that "everlasting life is the gracious gift of God through our Lord Jesus the Christ—the clothing upon the living soul or mortal body of life of a justified believer, with the quickening spirit or house which is from heaven, or the swallowing up of his death nature in the life of the Divine nature, so that this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality by an impartation of spirit-life energy into every fibre of its organism, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, during the sounding of the last trumpet; and according to his type the Lord Jesus, the saint then becomes a son of God in power by a spirit of holiness, through a resurrection from among the dead, and cannot sin because he is born of God, and lives and moves and has his being in the essential goodness and peace and blessedness of the Divine existence." Hence "the physical and moral impossibility of *an immoral agency of evil* exercising the attributes of an uncreated spirit — omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence—emanating from the Supreme Good, to antagonize His purposes and defeat the counsels of

His will concerning the redemption of the Adamic race for the glory of His name."

So far I quote what the followers of this new sect call their Marturion. As people generally can neither understand nor find time to read such verbose and minute confessions of faith, let me add that they believe that punishment on the finally impenitent is "the infliction on him as a living soul or mortal body of life of the many or few stripes in execution of his sentence until the appointed hour of his final doom arrives—to utterly perish in his own corruption." Furthermore, I glean that with them the Devil simply means sin in the flesh. As the reader will have gathered from the title of their confession, they baptize with immersion; they deny, amongst other things, the common doctrine of the Trinity, or that Christ is God and had an existence independent of the Father; that the Holy Ghost operates of His own power as God; that God fashioned man after His own image; that the serpent was an incarnation of an immoral intelligence; they deny the common ideas of heaven and hell; that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses the sin of the whole world, so that infants, idiots, and believers obtain eternal salvation under the covenanted and uncove-

nanted mercies of God; or that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas, through the instrumentality of the orthodox ministry as ambassadors of Christ, beseeching men in His stead to be reconciled to God by believing in the Gospel, and in the Jesus they present as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that Christ is with them always, even to the end of the world. Their appeal is, however, to the Bible, and its inspiration is one of the cardinal articles of their creed.

Let me now speak of their order. They meet every Sunday for worship, and for the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and have, besides, occasional meetings for the exposition and study of Scripture. The executive consists of a presiding elder and deacons elected by the members. A candidate for church membership is required to make a written confession, and every one joining the Ecclesia, either by immersion or by admission from other Ecclesias, is to sign the articles of constitution and order of which I have given a brief outline.

As regards the service, any brother is at liberty to take a part. Of course this is the defect of this system—as of all such, where the public are concerned. As a rule, nothing can be more inedifying

or dreary or repelling than amateur preaching, and this is manifestly the weak point of all the good people who find preachers so unprofitable, and who so delight in the sound of their own voices. As evangelizing agencies they are a failure. They produce no impression on the world. Men of sense want something more thoughtful, more in accordance with the facts of life, and the young are driven to the other extreme. I believe this remark will hold good of most of these super-refined Christians. They have a wonderful command of Scripture language. They can talk by the hour, and they are intensely ignorant, as all people who shut themselves to one book and ignore God's Word in His works must be. They may edify each other, they certainly have no power of edifying any one else.

The rules of their Sunday service are—Prayer, singing, comprehensive prayer, offered up by one of the brethren at the instance of the presiding brother on behalf of the members of the one body, the administration of the Lord's Supper, exhortation from or exposition of the Word by any brother who wishes to respond to the invitation of the presiding brother, and the Lord's Prayer in conclusion. After the communion, there is a box placed on the Lord's table to

receive, at the close of the service, the free-will offering of the brethren for the common good of the Ecclesia in every work of faith and labour of love. Besides, there is a monthly charge made to each of the brethren which is handed over to the brother responsible for its satisfaction on the last Sunday of every month. I find I have omitted to state that one article of faith is the restoration of the Jews, and the reign of Christ and His saints upon the earth for a thousand years. Already there has been, as was natural, division in the camp. The Christadelphians are an offshoot, as I understand. They are very adventurous people, these Christadelphians. They welcome strangers in their midst. The original Ecclesias contend for the application of the principle of separation in communion worship.

THE CHRISTADELPHIANS.

The love of names is one of the strongest passions of which human nature is susceptible. In starting a newspaper, in publishing a book, in opening a shop, a good name is half the battle. Years and years ago there was an individual advertising his academy as Hogflesh. 'How disgusting! Respectable parents objected, and the name became Hoflesh. A little while

since a poor fellow, tortured by the jeers of the world, advertised that, for the future, instead of bearing the monosyllable unpleasantly suggestive bequeathed him by less scrupulous or thicker-skinned parents, he would henceforth call himself, and be called by others, Mr. Norfolk Howard. (I should not wonder if by this time, with his new name, the man has married an heiress.) Poor Charles Lamb once wrote a farce, but as it turned out that the hero of it was Mr. Hogsflesh, good society would have none of it, and straightway it vanished into limbo. Our fathers can remember what ridicule was showered down on Dissenters by the *Edinburgh Review*, and what laughter there was at them all over the land when the Rev. Sydney Smith told how Mr. Shufflebottom was ordained at Bungay. It is to be feared that in the religious world names have had even a greater influence than amongst the profane. What good men have been persecuted and suffered wrong because they bore the name of a sect distasteful to an imperious majority! How the mob have thirsted for their blood! "These are Christians—away with them to the lions," said they of old Rome. "Down with the Roundheads!" was the cry of country squire and rural parson when a few devout men such as Richard

Baxter and others more or less known to fame met in a small room to keep alive the spirit of piety and prayer amongst themselves. It was the same when Wesley and Whitefield, often at the peril of life, proclaimed in parishes of England sunk in ignorance Gospel truths. There are thousands who, like the late Isaac Taylor, of Ongar, could tell how a "Church and King mob" kept them in perpetual fear, because they were "Meetingers." There are yet parishes in Suffolk and Norfolk where to go to chapel is to insure your being despised as a "Pogram," and cut by all the dignities of the village, even if you have the learning of a German professor and the piety of a *saint*. In the Babel of London, however, it is different; here, there is a rage for new names, and there are preachers and people ever ready to resort to a new name, as if novelty were a possibility in our day, after eighteen hundred years of theological hair-splitting and threshing of straw. The Christadelphians are the latest production in this way. They meet in Crowndale Hall, Crowndale Road, St. Pancras Road, every Sunday; in the morning, at eleven, for the breaking of bread, and worship; in the afternoon at three, when there is a Bible-class especially for inquirers, when opportunity to ask questions respecting

the one faith is afforded; and at seven in the evening, when we are told the Word of God is expounded in harmony with the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus anointed. One of the most active teachers is Mr. Watts, late of Vernon Chapel, King's Cross Road. The Athenæum Hall, Temple Road, Birmingham, seems to be the head-quarters of Christadelphian publications. There are published there the *Christadelphian Shield*, the *Biblical Newspaper*, and the *Ambassador*, monthly periodicals, and other publications more expensive, and aiming to be standard works.

This, I take it, is the epitome of their faith:—

"One God, the Eternal Father, dwelling in heaven in light of glory inconceivable; one universal irradiant Spirit, by which the Father fills all and knows all, and when He wills, performs all; one Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, begotten by the Spirit of the Virgin Mary, put to death for sin, raised from the dead for righteousness, and exalted to the heavens as a Mediator between God and man; man a creature of the ground, under sentence of death because of sin, which is his great enemy—the devil; deliverance from death by resurrection, and bodily glorification at the coming of Christ and inheritance of the kingdom of God, offered to all men on condition—1, of believing the glad tidings of Christ's accomplishment

at His first appearing, and of His coming manifestations in the earth as King of Israel and Ruler of the whole earth at the setting up of the kingdom of God; 2, of being immersed in water for His name; and 3, of continuing in well-doing to the end of this probationary career."

This is the teaching of the new sect. They rejoice in their emancipation from the bondage of orthodoxy. Mr. Watts says:—"My past nineteen years of religious life I regard as so much lost time taken up with the fables and follies of man's fleshly mind, systematized upon a pagan theology; and although I honestly thought myself right, and strove hard to lead others, yet I am now fully persuaded it was all done in ignorance of the true knowledge of God." He tells us the Evangelical party in the Church or Dissent do not know the Gospel. "Nothing can be more clear," he says, "than that this (their doctrine of the resurrection) first item of the Gospel as preached by Jesus and the Apostles does not form any part of the teaching either of those who pretend to be the successors of the Apostles, or the sects and parties of Dissenters who have imbibed their system of theology from the same polluted stream." The doctrine of the soul's essential and inherent immortality is a pagan

myth. For the heathen there is no future life; for them what Macbeth wished has come to pass, and life is indeed

"The be all and the end all here."

The mere belief of this doctrine relieves orthodoxy of the perplexing problem, What becomes of the heathen? and of course strikes at the foundation of the doctrine of purgatory. Yet we are not to suppose there will be no punishment for the wicked and the disobedient; they shall beaten with stripes, and then, according to the righteous Judge, enter upon that second death state, from which there shall be no resurrection—an opinion the direct opposite of that of Origen and Archbishop Tillotson, first promulgated in modern times by Dr. Rust, Bishop of Dromore. The Calvinistic formula is also, in the opinion of the Christadelphians, a mere travesty of the subject of the atonement. As to man in general, he is born to die. God treated the first man federally. He put him on probation, and in him all his successors stood or fell. We never read of immortal, never-dying souls in Scripture, and to foist such a meaning on 2 Cor. v. 8, as that it proves the existence of a separate state of disembodied spirits, is to handle the

Word of God deceitfully. Once Mr. Watts believed in a kingdom in the sky, a throne in the heart, a seed of Israel, a New Jerusalem and promised land, all mystically referring to something at present existing in the so-called Christian Church. He does so no longer. His eyes are opened, the light is come, and he and his friends, chiefly juveniles, rejoice; and if they have the true light, who shall say they have no reason to rejoice? Farewell, writes Mr. Watts, in a poem considered poetically of doubtful merit—

> "Farewell to the false, I welcome the true,
> And begin the year with Christ anew."

This reference to poetry reminds me that the Christadelphians have a hymn-book of their own, to frame which appears to have been a matter of no little trouble. With the hymns used by Christian churches in general they find much fault. They require something manly and robust, whereas the churches of all denominations rejoice in what is sentimental, and their songs of praise and devotion are described as "oceans of slops." Whether the Christadelphians have much improved theirs, I leave the reader to judge. As a specimen I quote one verse from Montgomery's well-known poem, "The Grave."

In their hymn-book I find it printed thus. I quote from memory:—

> "There is a calm for saints who weep,
> A rest for weary Weyyah found;
> In Christ secure they sweetly sleep,
> Hid in the ground."

At present the Christadelphians do not seem very flourishing. In their little room—which is miscalled a hall—there are about forty of them of an evening, quibbling earnestly, and to the best of their ability.

In taking leave of the Christadelphians, let me refer to a passage in our Church history. It is notorious that the celebrated Henry Dodwell, Camden Professor of History in the University of Oxford, in order to exalt the power and dignity of the priesthood, endeavoured to prove that the doctrine of the soul's natural mortality was the true and original doctrine, and that immortality was only at baptism conferred upon the soul by the gift of God through the hands of one set of regularly ordained clergy.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOME MINOR SECTS.

THERE are two classes of people of whom a wise man should be wary. He who comes to you in a jolly, confidential sort of way, and tells you that you know that he never pretended to be much of a saint, and he whose saintship is so sublimated that he finds all denominations in grievous error, and must form a new sect for himself. It is to be feared that such men are in a very bad way, and have most erroneous conceptions of God and His dealings. It is certainly remarkable that they are chiefly to be met with in the most ignorant sections of professors—amongst the

> "Petulant capricious sects,
> The maggots of corrupted texts."

Any liberal culture seems fatal to them. As soon as they manage to pronounce their h's and to talk grammatically, they can worship with other Christians, can rejoice in the magnificent inheritance which has

come down to the Church of our day from the sanctified intellect of former times—can derive edification from an educated ministry—possibly may sing the songs of a Keble, and may be able occasionally to join in a form of prayer which was found adequate for the expression of the spirituality of a Martyn or a Wilberforce.

THE PECULIAR PEOPLE.

In London, if we are to believe what we hear in some quarters, the real seat of true and undefiled religion is to be found amongst the small body who meet in an obscure street leading out of the Walworth Road. The neighbourhood is not a very attractive one, and is inhabited chiefly by retail tradesmen, who must find it in these hard times a struggle to make both ends meet. You must look sharp to find the place of which you are in search. In a row of shops opposite Lion Street you will see one in the day-time with the shutters up. On the shutters you will see one or two little bills headed Christian Meeting House, containing an invitation, as follows:—"Dear friend, you are affectionately invited to the following meetings." Then you have a list of the times of meeting, an announcement that all seats are free, and the text, "For both

He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." If you enter, you see a few benches in what is meant for a shop, and a few more in the room behind. Where the window is there is a desk, at which the chairman or conductor of the meeting sits. By the door is a little box into which the offerings of the faithful are poured. As a rule the place, which cannot hold more than forty or fifty adults comfortably, is well filled by very poor people. It is the only place of meeting of the sect in London. They are numerous, so they say, in Essex, Sussex, and Surrey, but in the Walworth Road they are few and not popular with their neighbours, who possibly know no better. Now and then up comes a street-boy and makes a hideous noise through the keyhole; but the Peculiar People have got used to that. I should fancy with the keen-witted artisans of London they make but little way. The reader may remember that a little while ago some of these people figured in a police-court. They had refused all proper medical aid for a child, and it died in consequence. They have great faith, these poor people. They have great scorn also for people more benighted than themselves. They speak contemptuously of the time

when they knew no better, when they trusted in forms, and attended on a one-man ministry, and were humbled and dejected on account of sin, and called themselves miserable sinners, and confessed that they had done the things they ought not to have done, and left undone those things which they should have done. All that sort of feeling and talk is all wicked in their opinion; for theirs is the glorious liberty of the sons of God and joint heirs of heaven. Religion has no difficulties for them, no mysteries; nothing beyond the reach of man, heights to which he cannot ascend, depths which he cannot fathom. To come together and declare their unspeakable joy is all that they have to do. For this the beginner is as competent as the grey-headed believer, the sister as well as the brother, the ignorant man as well as he who has had a college education. Triumphantly they ask—

> "When the Lord would speak,
> Think ye he needs the Latin or the Greek?"

Of course not. And thus in turn they all preach and pray with a zeal which literally is not according to knowledge. If a man cannot say he lives without sin, they set him down as no Christian. At one time they held that as the Spirit of God only teaches one

thing, that if true so-called Christians disagreed in Church matters, one of them was a child of the devil; and as they were not at all backward in applying this doctrine, they were split up as fast as they gathered together. They have a great deal of the Methodist leaven amongst them, and at prayer, or while speaking is going on, express their feelings in a way which, to a stranger, may be considered unnecessarily noisy. Their leaders seem to be a small tradesman in the Southwark Road, and a little, pale, wizened female, whose utterances and prayers are of the most extraordinary character—a sort of sing-song, now rising and then dropping, in a way which in a secular personage and on secular subjects would be ludicrous in the extreme. But they profess to have no leaders. They have elders, who are simply elders. They become such by lapse of time alone.

As to their organization, I much question if they have any. One brother assured me there were rules, but as the price was fourpence, and as trade was slack, he had been unable to procure a copy of them. In answer to our appeal, an elder said there were such, but they were under lock and key, and he could not find them for us; whereupon another brother reached out a New Testament, with the

assurance that there, and there alone, were their rules. What information we could get we had to fish out by questions. As to Church membership, they have no preliminaries. All who come are of the Church; those whom the Lord calls will join them, and if the Lord has not called them they will soon drop away. They consider that every service is the sacrament, and they have no special form. In the same way they have no baptism—infant or adult, creeds, confessions of faith, forms of prayer, ministers set apart and trained to preach;—all these things they have done away with. By communion as brother with brother, and sister with sister, they can cherish the true Christian life. If one of them lack anything, let him or her ask of God. How familiarly and at times irreverently they pray, the reader can well imagine. It is difficult to say common things with propriety, says the old Latin proverb. It is more difficult to introduce them into prayer, to inform the Lord that Brother Jones would have been present had he not been unable to come, and to explain the peculiarly distressing circumstances of Sister Smith. For acting on the world outside, they have great faith in out-of-door preaching, an exercise in which they take great delight, and for which they consider them-

selves peculiarly qualified. They forget, as one has wittily remarked, that if the Lord does not need man's learning, still less does He need man's ignorance. As to the financial question, they get over that without much difficulty. Their expenses are next to nothing, and each brother or sister is ever ready to contribute his mite. They have nothing to pay for pew-rents; they have no minister's salary to collect; they have no educational institutions to support; the rent of a room in a back street is no serious item; and as to church furniture, that is easily supplied—a door-mat, a dirty desk, half a dozen old forms, a second-hand Bible or so, a greasy hymn-book that has done duty many times, and they have all that they require. It is not for me to judge my brother. To show him how fatal is his fluency of tongue, how presumptuous his hope, how unfounded his joy, is a thankless task. All I would suggest is, that he should exercise a little of that charity of which he stands in need himself, and not fancy that to him has been revealed what men of greater piety and higher intellect have been unable to discover. Another objection may also be taken. In an ancient town, with a fine old castle, many, many years ago, there was an attempt to form a volunteer regiment.

Unfortunately all wanted to be officers; the consequence was, the regiment came to grief. The Peculiar People have too many officers. Where every one has an equal right to teach, the number of the taught will be small indeed.

THE SANDEMANIANS.

In this our day one of the expiring sects of Christendom is that of the Sandemanians. At no time have they been a very powerful denomination either from their numbers, their influence, or their wealth. They have never yet made their mark upon the world, nor are they likely to do so now. The late Professor Faraday was one of their elders, and for a time conferred on them a little of his world-wide reputation; but one swallow does not make a summer, nor does one great man confer greatness on a church. The eccentricity of men of genius is proverbial. Sharp, the engraver, believed in the lunatic Brothers and the impostor Joanna Southcote; Irving in the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles; Swedenborg in his faculty of piercing the veil which envelopes all sublunary affairs and realizing what we are taught to consider will only be revealed to us when the

heavens and earth shall pass away as a scroll, and time shall be no more. Even our great emancipator Luther, the Moses who led forth—to borrow a figure from Cowley—our modern Israel from its house of bondage, and brought them into the promised land, testified to a visible appearance of the Prince of Darkness, to get rid of whom he had to dash his ink-bottle, a type, as it always seems to me, of the victory yet to be achieved by means of print over the devil and all his works. But Faraday is gone. No longer can the Sandemanians boast the possession of one of England's greatest philosophers; and they have now little power of influencing or predominating in society. They seem to me a very plain and humble folk, aiming at keeping up in their own hearts Christian love, and in their own circle primitive practices, rather than in aggressive movements, without which no church or denomination can expect in this busy age long to live.

There is one Sandemanian church in London, up in Barnsbury, at the corner of one of the streets running out of the Roman Road. The original church was founded in the year 1760, in the Barbican. City improvements necessitated its removal to this site,

where it has now been erected four or five years. It was in the old chapel that Professor Faraday used to take his turn in preaching. In the new chapel his widow is still one of the worshippers. As you pass the place you would not see anything very extraordinary. It is a neat, simple structure, of white brick, with no architectural pretensions of any kind. It only differs from other places of worship in having no board up announcing to what denomination it belongs, nor the name of the preacher, nor the hours of assembly, nor where applications for sittings are to be made, nor to whom subscriptions are to be paid. Indeed, the only reference at all to an outside world seems to consist in the putting up a caution intimating that the building is under the guardianship of the police, and persons evilly disposed had better mind what they are about. Thus, and thus only, is the recognition of an outer world lying in darkness and needing the true light of the Gospel in any way acknowledged. They have service twice on Sunday, in the morning and afternoon, and a week-day meeting on Wednesday evening. They have no Sunday or day-school, no tract distribution, no district visiting, no minister, and no other means of acting on the world or forming religious opinion. Indeed,

I fancy they are averse to anything of the kind. "We are utterly," I read in one of their publications, "against aiming to promote the cause we contend for either by creeping into private homes or by causing our voice to be heard in the streets, or by officiously obtruding our opinions upon others." Even if you enter their place of worship there is no pew-opener to show you to a seat. They claim simply to obey the commands of the Bible implicitly, to be a church founded for mutual edification and love—nothing more. The stranger who for the first time attends will be struck with the absence of the pulpit, instead of which he will find two large desks, one above the other, in which are seated three or four elderly persons; the attention which is paid to the reading of the Bible; the illiterate way in which those who preach and pray do so; and the length and dulness of the service. The morning service, for instance, begins at eleven, and is never over till half-past one. No wonder the Sandemanians are not a vigorous sect. I believe they have but one place of worship in England, three or four in Scotland, and more, how many I know not, in America. The chapel in Barnsbury will seat, I imagine, from three to four hundred people, and it is always nearly full, and attended by

people in respectable appearance. Of the really poor they seem to have none at all.

The Sandemanians originated in Scotland, in 1728, as a kind of reaction against Presbyterianism and Calvinism. Mr. John Glass, a minister of the Kirk, was deposed by the Presbyterian Church Courts because he taught that the Church could be subject to no league or covenant—that faith was simple belief—and that Christianity never was, nor ever could be the established religion of any nation without becoming the reverse of what it was when first instituted. Mr. Robert Sandeman, one of his elders, however, by his numerous writings, left on the new organization the impress of his name. In these days, when metaphysical speculation has little encouragement amongst Christians, the Sandemanians tell us they have no formal creed or confession of faith—that they simply follow Scripture practice, and that is all. For this purpose they meet together on the first day of the week, not only to read and hear the Word, but particularly to break bread or communicate together in the Lord's Supper; to pray, which is done by several in turns; to listen to an exhortation from one of the elders. They are a Christian republic. At the conclusion of every prayer—

whether pronounced by the elders or the brethren—the whole church say Amen, according to what is intimated in 1 Cor. xiv. 16. In the interval between the morning and the afternoon service they have their love-feast, of which every member partakes, when they salute each other with a holy kiss. The children are all baptized, on the plea that if one of the parents believes the children are not unclean but holy, and because it is written in Acts, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and *thy* house." They deem it unlawful to eat flesh with its blood; they wash each other's feet; they hold all things in common so far as the claims of the poor and the Church are concerned; they forbid no amusements but those connected with the lot, such as cards or dice; their elders are chosen from amongst them on account of their piety and character, and are ordained by prayer and fasting, and laying on of hands. A deacon is elected in the same way, minus the fasting. Any one who appears to understand and believe the truth may be admitted into their fellowship. When a person is excommunicated the act takes place in the presence of the whole church. Two elders must be present at every act of discipline. It may be further stated that in every church

transaction, whether it be receiving, censuring, or expelling members, or choosing officers, or in performing any other business, unanimity is deemed indispensable. If there is a dissenting brother, after the reasons of the dissent have been stated, and judged unscriptural by the church, he is expelled. The Sandemanians allow neither government by a majority nor a representation of minorities.

As an outsider I should say nothing was ever more uninteresting, nothing ever more calculated to alienate from religion intelligent young people, than the services conducted by the Sandemanians. The elders and deacons, excellent men undoubtedly, are singularly deficient in oratorical ability. I think the worst sermon I ever heard in my life was preached by one of them. They cannot even read the Bible in an impressive and edifying manner, nor is their psalmody much better. They have a literal version of the Psalms, and they sing them through, a couple of verses or so at a time. I give one specimen I heard, not the last time I attended there:—

"Moab I will My Wash-pot make,
O'er Edom cast my shoe;
Do thou, O land of Palestine,
Triumph, because of Me."

The modern hymnology, of which all sections of

the Church are justly proud, exists in vain for them. Their church seems utterly destitute of intellectual vigour; and when, as in these days, brains are beginning to rule, the piety that rejects or ignores them is in danger. There is a relation between the Bible and modern thought of which the good people who preach dull sermons and make dull prayers up in Barnsbury have no idea.

THE SOUTHCOTTIANS.

Incredible as it may seem, there are, in these days of penny newspapers and universal enlightenment, Southcottians in London. They may be met with in the neighbourhood of Kennington Common, and in one of the forlornest spots in Islington, Elder Walk, Essex Road. Thence they issue documents worthy of Bedlam. I have now before me their "Midnight Cry, Behold the Bridegroom cometh." And this august warning and bruising and inviting announcement is "to and for whomsoever it may concern of Mammon-crushed Israel." One extract I fancy will suffice—one at any rate I must give, otherwise such religious lunacy will be held incredible.

"Oh, dutifully observe now, O all Israel, (namely)

O Judah and Ephraim, that this Universal Marriage overture unto you, together with these Proxy Marriage lines and record, are made and offered you entirely because 'I am' and Jesus Christ is Life, Love, and Light everlasting, and because of His power and right to give, and the Son of Man's to receive, and the worthy Woman to bring Him forth, and Israel's to inherit,—viz., the promises unto Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and all their seed, who were originally the void waters and dark-faced deep until God said, Let there be Light and there was Light. And from henceforth there shall be Light, and both Light and Love abundantly in Heaven, here below as in Heaven above, for in the beginning God created Heaven and Earth, and did, and is, and will finish on the sixth day the same and all the host of them."

The main instrument in the above precious compilation is Whatmore, one of Joanna Southcott's chosen apostles. The paper referred to is issued from No. 9, Elder Walk, Essex Road, Islington, London, of Britannia Zion. It states, as far as I can gather, that in August last year something of importance was to take place. "A month since and the gauntlet has been successfully run; therefore, Whatmore, now has Thy lowly instrument Watmore Whatmore, John, to submit of and by Thy worthiness, O Lord God. Oh,

shall I submit a Song of Solomon, or a Lamentation of Thy Prophet Jeremiah, or a sermon of Thy immortalizing mount, unto Thy flock, O, O, O! Submit, love," &c., &c. I gather that the mystery of God is to be finished speedily by unveiling His Bible word, and His codicil thereto by His spouse, "the wonderful Queen of prophets, Joanna Southcott, that thus sons and daughters by her womanhood may greatly replenish the earth, and that the poor now suffering from the murdering love of money in consequence of unjust stewardship may fare better in time to come." This seems to be the only idea I can extract from the Southcottians. All mammon laws are to be abolished, money currency is to be destroyed, there is to be no more selling, martyring, and bartering of humanity and their requirements, "thus saith the Lord Jehovah, by J. Watmore Whatmore, and J. G. Grant, of Zion."

As these prophets speak of the spouse of God, Eve the second, called Joanna Southcott, Queen of the prophets, who in 1802 opened her commission, and declared herself to be the woman spoken of in Revelation—"the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and clothed with the sun"—let me briefly tell her story:—

Joanna was born at Gettisham, in Devonshire.

Her parents were in the farming line, and members of the Established Church. She herself was in service or in industrious employment, "without," writes her biographer, "any other symptom of a disordered intellect than that she was attached to the Methodists." Nevertheless, it was Mr. Pomeroy, the clergyman whose church she attended at Exeter, who appears to have encouraged her to print her prophecies and to assume spiritual gifts. The books which she sent into the world were written partly in rhyme, all the verse and the greater part of the prose being delivered in the character of the Almighty. Her discourses were nothing else than a mere rhapsody of texts—vulgar dreams and vulgar interpretations. Her fame spread, and seven wise men from different parts of the country, the seven stars, came to believe in her. Among the early believers were three clergymen, one of them a man of fashion, fortune, and noble family. As her followers supplied her with money and treated her with great reverence, the more extravagant were her assertions and the loftier her claims. The scheme of redemption was completed in her. If the tree of knowledge was violated by Eve, the tree of life was reserved for Joanna. Her greatest triumph was a conflict with

the devil, which lasted a week. According to her own account the devil had the worst of it. She gave him ten words for one, and allowed him no time to speak. Very ungallantly, at the termination of the dispute he remarked no man could tame a woman's tongue; he said the sands of an hour-glass did not run faster. It was better to dispute with a thousand men than one woman. After this dispute Joanna is said—and her followers believed it—to have fasted forty days.

Shortly after commencing her mission, she published the following declaration:—

"I, Joanna Southcott, am clearly convinced that my calling is of God, and my writings are indited by His Spirit, as it is impossible that any spirit but an all-wise God that is wondrous in working, wondrous in wisdom, wondrous in power, wondrous in truth, could have brought round such mysteries so full of truth as in my writings; so I am clear in whom I believed, that all my writings came from the Spirit of the Most High God.

"JOANNA SOUTHCOTT."

One of her means of making money and increasing her influence was the sealing of such as signed their names to a declaration intimating a desire for Christ's

kingdom to be established upon earth, and the destruction of that of the devil. Whoever signed his or her name received a sealed letter containing these words:—"The sealed of the Lord the elect. Precious man's redemption to inherit the tree of life, to be made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." To this document Joanna's name was appended. In December, 1813, she declared her pregnancy, and prophesied that she should have a son that year by the power of the Most High. Her followers now increased rapidly, and chapels were opened for promulgating her doctrines. As the time drew nigh presents of all descriptions, it was said, came in unasked. There was a magnificent cot for the expected Messiah, manufactured by Seddons. All the articles used on such occasions—as laced caps, bibs, robes, papboats, caudle cups, &c.,—were lavishly supplied; and when it appeared that the poor woman had died, asking pardon for her late blasphemous doctrines and past sins, the delusion was still kept up, and her followers believed that she would reappear. It was only after a *post-mortem* examination that the fiction of a miraculous conception was dispelled. Joanna was sixty years old at the time of her death, and was

buried privately in Marylebone Upper Burying-ground, near Kilburn.

The present leader is John Whatmore, formerly a smith, but who has been led in a marvellous way, according to his own confession, to believe in Joanna. He is an open-air preacher, and may be met with in London Fields, Somers Town, and elsewhere pursuing his calling, which apparently is not very lucrative. He has two boards joined together, on which some unintelligible jargon is printed, which he calls his two sticks. These he holds up to view, at the same time calling out, "Britannia! Ephraim! Judah!" Then he commences his oration, a strange medley of Scripture and nonsense. According to him the world is in the worst possible way; and the devil has a fine time of it. The present commercial system of society by no means meets with Whatmore's approval. The poor are rotting off, and woe to them to whom such a catastrophe is due. There are many disciples, he tells us; but fear of this world and a false sense of shame prevent them from declaring themselves. There must be some, otherwise the man could not get a living. His library seems to consist chiefly, if not exclusively, of the New Testament and his own absurd hand-bills, which a printer supplies him with

on the chance of his selling them. In answer to my inquiry as to where he attended when not preaching himself, his reply was that he sometimes went to the Agricultural Hall; but they were not advanced enough for him, and so he falls back on himself, and goes about to do what he thinks is—or at any rate what he says he thinks is—the Lord's work. There is no bounce about him. He is apparently a muddle-headed, well-meaning mystic; about as mad or sane as others of his way of thinking. That he is wretchedly poor, that he is ignorant, that his language to ordinary folks seems simply unintelligible, perhaps in certain quarters may be accepted as signs of his Divine commission. At any rate, he is a representative man. If he is ignorant and talks nonsense, what must be the ignorance and the nonsense existing in those who listen to him? How dense must be the ignorance, how crass the nonsense cherished in his hearers! It may be asked, and this is a question I put to the religious public, is not the manifestation of such religious folly a reproach to our age? If the Church had done its duty, would such a folly have been possible?

THE SPIRITUALISTS.

Somehow or other the Spiritualists are under a cloud in this country, and their leader—Mr. Home—has been compelled, in consequence of the decision of a highly-prejudiced and extremely ignorant jury, to hand over to Mrs. Lyon a very handsome sum of money which she had conveyed to him in consequence of representations made by him to her that such was the desire of her deceased lord and master. Up to that time Spiritualism was making great way, and Mr. Home, as its high priest and apostle, was in request with the nobility, and was the friend of kings and emperors. He had married a Russian Countess; he wore a diamond ring on one hand, given by the Czar, and on the other hand another, the present of the Emperor of France. His speaking eye and melodramatic manner made him in society a really charming man; literary ladies were enthusiastic in his favour. A spiritual Athenæum was opened in Sloane Street, Chelsea, at which a very eminent man gave the inaugural discourse, and at which there were spirit drawings displayed, and spirit poems read—all suggestive of the fact that the spirits were very ordinary people, after all. But it was not so much there as at the houses of his friends that

Mr. Home tried best to display his powers. At such times there was a wonderful parade of religion. Previous to his attending a *séance*, a friend of the author was asked whether he believed in the doctrine of the Trinity; "because," said the fair questioner, "we find that the spirits do not like to appear before sceptics;" and the Bible was read, and prayer offered up in apparently the most reverent, and earnest, and occasionally the most tiresome manner. Then came a few childish tricks, such as a handkerchief conveyed by spirits *under* the table, the accordion played by spirits *under* the table, and other intimations of what was said to be spiritual agency, but all equally out of sight. A few marvellous things were said by Home —secrets occasionally—which the hearer thought no one knew but himself, but secrets of the most uninteresting and unimportant character. And then the unbeliever passed out, scarcely knowing whether to laugh or weep; whether he had assisted at a religious meeting or a farce; whether he had been in the company of a mortal fitted for a solemn mission to an idle and adulterous generation seeking after a sign, or whether all he had seen and heard was but the clever manœuvring of a clever professor of legerdemain. Home has fallen low. Henceforth he will

have to take his stand with the Brothers Davenport and other doubtful mediums who have had their day.

The Spiritualists in this country set great store by Home. They have never been able in our cold climate to raise mediums worth talking about. The latter have been chiefly American importations. Mr. Harris came as a preacher of Spiritualism, and, after a few Sundays at Store Street, vanished like a spirit, and was heard of no more. A *Spiritual Magazine* was started. Mrs. Marshall and her niece, of 22, Red Lion Street, Holborn, were declared by that—we presume official authority—to be "Media." Then came the solid testimony of a learned American judge, declaring "the first thing demonstrated to us is that we can commune with the spirits of the departed; that such communication is through the instrumentality of persons yet living; that the fact of mediumship is the result of physical organization; that the kind of communion is effected by moral causes; and that the power, like our other faculties, is possessed in different degrees, and is capable of improvement by cultivation." But the sect did not prosper. Then came grotesque indications of spiritual presence. Not content with table-rapping, the spirits

had recourse to all kinds of antics, and the subject of Spiritualism became more and more distasteful to the intelligent, and more and more popular with that large class of idle wealthy men and women who have no healthy occupation, and are always in search of excitement. The climax was reached when the *Cornhill* told how Mr. Home floated in the air, how heavy tables would leap from one end of the room to the other, how music was produced on accordions, "grand at times, at others pathetical, at others distant and long-drawn," when those accordions were held by no mortal hands. "I can state," wrote Dr. Gulley, of Malvern, "that the record made in the article 'Stranger than Fiction' is in every particular correct; that the phenomena therein related actually took place, and moreover that no trick-machinery, sleight of hand, or other artistic contrivance, produced what we heard and beheld. I am quite as convinced of this last as I am of the facts themselves." Well might the Spiritualists crow; had not Robert Owen and Lord Lyndhurst also believed? Was it not uncharitable to say that they were in their dotage? The testimony of such men settled everything.

In America, Spiritualism is more prosperous than in England. In the "Plain Guide to Spiritualism"

Mr. Clarke tells us there are in that country 500 public mediums who receive visitors; more than 50,000 private ones; 500 books and pamphlets on the subject have been published, and many of them immensely circulated; there are 500 public speakers and lecturers on it, and more than 1000 occasional ones. There are nearly 2000 places for public circles, conferences, or lectures, and in many places flourishing public schools. The decided believers are 2,000,000, the nominal ones nearly 5,000,000; on the globe itself it is calculated there are 20,000,000 supposed to recognise the fact of spiritual intercourse. In Paris and the different parts of France the manifestations have been almost of every kind, and of the most decisive and distinguished character. "Great numbers of persons have been cured by therapeutic mediums," writes William Howitt, "of diseases and injuries incurable by all ordinary means. Some of these persons are well known to me, and are every day bearing their testimony in aristocratic society." Writing thus, Mr. Howitt defines Spiritualism "as the great theologic and philosophic reformer of the age; the great requickener of religious life; the great consoler and establisher of hearts; the great herald to the wanderers of earth starved upon the

husks of mere college dogmas." "I believe," says Mr. C. Hall, "that as it now exists, Spiritualism has mainly but one purpose—to confute and destroy Materialism, by supplying sure, and certain, and *palpable* evidence that to every human being God gives a soul, which He ordains shall not perish when the body dies." This, as good old Isaak Walton says, in narrating Dr. Donne's Vision, "this is a relation that will beget some wonder; and it well may, for most of our world are at present possessed with an opinion that miracles and visions are ceased."

What is Spiritualism? Ask its opponents. They regard it as necromancy, a practice not only forbidden under the Old Testament, but which even in the New we find classed by St. Paul under the general denomination of witchcraft, with such works of the flesh as idolatry, murder, adultery, and drunkenness, concerning all of which the Apostle Paul adds the solemn declaration (Gal. v. 19—21), "That they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Such undoubtedly is the feeling entertained with regard to Spiritualism by the great majority of orthodox Christians, who are quite satisfied by Scripture testimony, who accept what they think God has revealed to them in His Book, and who seek or require

nothing more. In a weak but well-meaning work just put into my hands ("Spiritualism and other Signs") I read: "The whole system is essentially opposed to faith in, and walking with, Jesus Christ, and the Spiritualist knows it." The writer quotes the well-known text: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron." At the same time there are many in the Christian Church of undoubted piety and intelligence who are believers in Spiritualism. After all, however, they are the exception rather than the rule. Amongst all sects there is a condemnation of Spiritualism of a very sweeping character. In this one thing Wesleyans, Low Churchmen, and Congregationalists are agreed. The outer world, the Secularists and the Positivists, of course regard Spiritualism with the same scorn and unbelief with which they regard all religion, whether true or false, whether old as the hills or but yesterday's creation.

"It is wonderful that five thousand years have now elapsed since the Creation of the world, and still it is undecided whether or not there has ever been an instance of the spirit of any person appearing after

death. All argument is against it, but all belief is for it." Such is a sentence I borrow from Dr. Johnson. It is as applicable to the present time as to that in which he lived.

In conclusion, let me add, as a distinct organization, hitherto Spiritualism has failed in this country. I hear nothing of the *Spiritual Athenæum* now, nothing of Mr. Harris, either as preacher or poet, very little even of Mr. Home. Strange that a man who could not write an ordinary note decently should have been a favourite medium of the spirits. I am aware, however, the Spiritualists will extract an argument out of that last remark of mine in favour of Spiritualism. A young Jewish convert it is said would go to Rome. His teacher, a priest, feared, knowing Rome too well. On his return he questioned his pupil as to what he saw in Rome. "Ah!" said he. "I am persuaded now your religion is of God, otherwise it would have perished of the wickedness of its professors."

THE CAMPBELLITES.

In America of late years there has been an enormous increase of what are called the Campbellites. They now number in that country 500,000, have fifteen colleges, and a large university with 800 stu-

dents ; they have 2000 churches, and 1000 regular ministers. They are also well represented as regards literature. They have one quarterly, six or seven weeklies, two ladies' magazines, and several Sunday-school papers. In London they are not a numerous class. They have places of worship in the Milton Hall, Camden Town, and in College Street, Chelsea. The truth is, as regards chapels and churches, public worship is as much a social as a religious institution. Fashion has a great deal to do with the attendance. It is the fashion to go to church. It is not the fashion to run after new sects or preachers of new doctrines. In a flourishing church there are societies which bring people into contact with one another—these promote in their turn, like the far-famed ale of Trinity, "brotherly neighbourhood." The old ladies get a habit of gossiping—Jones, Brown, and Robinson take tea together—and then young people form alliances in consequence often of a serious and matrimonial character. It is uphill work, then, in London for a little isolated cause. The odds against its permanent success are infinite. Still the Campbellites are making way. They have a fine base of operations in America, and they are spreading over England,—if they are not doing much in the Metro-

polis. They are good, pious people, and earnest in the conviction that they alone understand and maintain apostolical charity; and deeply deploring the present divided and unhappy state of the Christian Church, and with a view to unity, they increase the number of divisions by withdrawing from all other religious bodies, and forming a fresh one of their own.

Who are the Campbellites? I will endeavour to answer the question. Their creed, as they tell us, is simply the Messiahship. According to them, the Christian creed thus presents for individual and immediate acceptance the one living, personal, loving, Divine, all-wise and omnipotent Saviour from ignorance, sin, and rebellion. Humanly devised and written creeds demand faith in abstract metaphysical, theological, ecclesiastical, and political propositions, and have so effectually supplanted the good confession, that though admitted as a doctrine, few churches or professors of the present day would consider themselves safe in depending solely on its saving faith or belief in God's testimony as contained in His Word, as delivered by apostles and prophets, and as corroborated by signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Campbellism

distinguishes the Gospel not only from the words of men, but from Scripture generally—that Jesus is its subject. It apprehends him not only as Jesus of Nazareth, but as God manifest in the flesh—the Son and Christ of the Father consecrated to the high offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. It recognises the applicability and reference of the Saviour's mission and work to the individual himself as clearly as if he were the only sinner for whom Christ has died; nor is it a mere intellectual assent, but a willing, heartfelt reception of the truth and surrender of the whole man, body, soul, and spirit. Now, as I imagine most orthodox Christians would say as much, and would state their belief in similar terms, with the exception of the Presbyterians and Episcopalians, who have the advantage or disadvantage, whatever it may be, of having to repeat a creed of more scholastic character, the question still remains, why cannot the Campbellites worship with other Christians? I must frankly confess there is in their services nothing more fitted to make an impression upon the world than there is in the services of other denominations; neither at Chelsea nor in Camden Town do you get from their preachers an idea that they are men of greater power, higher spiritual life, deeper experience, or more use-

fulness than are others. Clearly this definition of Christian belief is no warrant for another schism, even though the aim be Christian unity, and the putting a stop to the endless differences which are the grief of the Christian and the laugh of the worldling. Their form of worship is eminently simple and dissenting—a revival, it may be, of that of apostolic times—that I cannot say as, according to some, there are remains of a liturgy in the Pauline epistles. It is not clear how the ancients worshipped, but it is clear the Campbellites simply sing and pray, and read the Scriptures and deliver an address. They are Baptists, and they believe that Baptism is essential to salvation. Baptist churches are numerous in London. No Baptist need hire room, or chapel, or barn, or hall, and meet there to edify himself and his friends apart from the great and active community who feel as he does in that matter. The Campbellites maintain that many things are wrong which are done in other churches. They assume that there was a greater purity in apostolic times than now, and they aim to revive it. For this purpose they exalt the power of the Church, and depreciate that of the ministry. I don't learn that they have all things in common, though that was certainly

one of the most prominent features in apostolic times; but they draw a sharp line between the Church and the world, and in their Sunday services almost ignore the latter. They have little of that charity which hopeth all things, which thinketh no evil, which is long-suffering. If they are building a chapel they would not take the money of an unconverted man. If they were collecting subscriptions for the sending out Evangelists, for the printing of religious books and tracts, for the support of a Christian ministry, they would refuse those of worldly men. More logical or more consistent in small matters, they make no provision in their books of praise for the unconverted man. I find in their hymn-book no one verse in the whole volume is designed to be sung simply by the unconverted. Their hymns are for those who, having the spirit of adoption, cry, Abba Father! It is proper, says the writer of the preface to the volume to which I refer, it is proper for convicted sinners, who do not know the way, to seek salvation, but they are not called to sing their sorrow, much less are Christians called to unite with them. Again, he tells us the unconverted have no need to sing prayers for pardon. What then, I may ask, are they to do? The answer is that, they

may stand and listen and be sung at, as well as preached at. Mr. King, the writer already quoted, says, "Though there are not hymns for the unconverted to sing, there are appeals to the unconverted to be sung by the church." Practically, however, the arrangement differs little from that of other churches. A book is put into your hands, and the chances are, people who are in the habit of singing sing. As only immersed adults are Christians, it is not clear what the young people who attend their service are; that they sing I can, however, testify. It is to be feared that the Campbellites are not exempt from the faults of all religious worship, as manifested in strength of expression. If men and women believed what they say or sing in all our churches and chapels, little would remain for us but the Millennium.

The Campbellites do seek to guard against this danger. It is the Church that sings. It is the Church that worships. All Christian worship is in Scripture confined to Christians, and necessarily so, for worship offered by any one else is not Christian. Thus it is only on the faithful in Christ Jesus that the various items of Christian worship are enjoined: they are profaned and prostituted when applied to

any others. In the morning of the Sabbath the Church meets by itself to break bread and sing and pray;. on such occasions the members exhort and edify one another. In the evening the service is of a more general character; appeals are made to the unconverted, and they are invited to attend.

> "All you that are weary and sad come,
> And you that are cheerful and glad come,
> In robes of humility clad come,
> Away from the waters of strife.
> Let youth in the freshness of bloom come,
> Let man in the pride of his noon come,
> Let age on the verge of the tomb come,
> Let none in their pride stay away."

As a matter of fact, the unconverted do not avail themselves of the offer. It is a small place of meeting, the Milton Hall, but it is quite large enough, and more than large enough for the church and congregation. One brother prays and reads the Scriptures and gives out a hymn, another brother delivers an address, another brother concludes with prayer, and then there is a prayer-meeting after. The advantage of the Campbellites seems to me that they are only a little duller than their neighbours. The little ones around me, when I attended, found it hard to keep awake, and yet the service is short.

It commences at seven and closes a little after eight. As they have no paid ministry, as their elders and deacons take the chief parts in the service, even after supporting an evangelist their expenses are not heavy, and in this they find a plausible plea. If, say they, half a dozen churches are built where one would be enough, and half a dozen ministers are kept where only one is required, clearly in consequence of these divisions amongst brethren, there is a lamentable waste of money and power and spiritual influence. Unfortunately, as regards London there is no force in the plea, and will not be till the time comes when the various sections of the Christian Church shall have made all necessary provision for the spiritual wants of the metropolis.

THE MORMONS.

Thirty years ago, writes Hepworth Dixon, in that glowing account of Mormonism which, next to "Spiritual Wives," he seems to consider as the crowning glory of his life,—"thirty years ago there were six Mormons in America, none in England, none in the rest of Europe, and to-day (1866) they have twenty thousand saints in Salt Lake City; four thousand each in Ogden, Prono, and Logan; in the whole of

their stations in these valleys (one hundred and six settlements properly organized by them and ruled by bishops and elders) a hundred and fifty thousand souls; in other parts of the United States about eight or ten thousand; in England and its dependencies about fifteen thousand; in the rest of Europe ten thousand; in Asia and the South Sea Islands about twenty thousand; in all not less, perhaps, than two hundred thousand followers of the gospel preached by Joseph Smith. All these converts have been gathered into the temple in thirty years."

The other day the Mormons of the London district met at the Music Hall, Store Street, and held a conference. Mr. Franklin Richards, the President, delivered an address. From his speech it appeared that in the metropolis there were nine branches, one hundred and seven elders of conference, fifty-three priests, twenty-four teachers, thirty deacons. During the six months preceding 132 persons had been baptized, sixteen cut off or had died; the total number in the London district, including officers, was 1172. I imagine the Mormonites flourish better in districts less enlightened. Around Birmingham they are very sanguine, and I have seen the miners in Merthyr

Tydfil by thousands listening to the gospel according to Joe Smith and Brigham Young.

The principal place of worship of the Mormons or Latter-day Saints is in the Commercial Road, but there are others; one of them is in George Street, Gower Street. In that locality there is a very shabby dancing saloon, from which the graces seem long since to have departed. At three o'clock every Sunday afternoon the Mormons assemble there. On a raised platform may be seen seated some seven or eight men, apparently decent workmen. Below them is a table, around which are a few lads, who set the tunes and take round the sacrament, which is administered every Sunday to all, including any strangers and children who may feel disposed to partake of it. Benches fill up the rest of the room, which are occupied chiefly by females with their families—including, of course, the baby, the inevitable feature in all gatherings of the lower orders. All seem enthusiastic and very friendly, and wretchedly poor. Their idea of Mormonism seems to be chiefly that of a successful emigration scheme, only mixed up with a little of the religious phraseology, which is most fluently uttered unfortunately by the unthinking masses to whom words do not represent ideas. You might fancy as

you enter that you had made a mistake, and got amongst the Primitive Methodists. The hymns are very much the same, and so is frequently the style of prayer. Sermon there is none, but instead you have addresses, the burden of which is generally of one kind. The speaker is thankful that at last he has known the Lord, and wishes he had done more for Him, and hopes, if health and strength be spared, to do more. There is also generally an address of a wider character. The Lord is calling them out of this country, where the Gentiles have the rule over them, and they are to hasten, old and young, to the City of the Saints. They are to pay their debts, mend their old clothes, save all they can, and then those that cannot pay for their voyage will be helped to join the settlement in Utah. Apart from the prayers and hymns, these meetings seem secular rather than spiritual,—to have reference more to this world than the next. If, as it seems to me, the Mormonites in this country have had a Methodist training, they have managed to eliminate pretty completely the Methodist theology; but, perhaps, they treat it as they do the Bible. The Mormons profess to believe in it, at the same time they omit its spiritual teaching

altogether. Their theology may be best explained in one of their own hymns:—

"The God that others worship is not the God for me,
He has neither part nor body, and cannot hear and see;
But I've a God that lives above,
A God of power and love,
A God of Revelation,—Oh, that's the God for me!
Oh! that's the God for me; oh! that's the God for me.

"A church without apostles is not the church for me,
It's like a ship dismasted, afloat upon the sea,
But I've a church that's always led
By the twelve stars around its head,
A church with good foundations—oh! that's the church for me!
Oh! that's the church for me! oh! that's the church for me!

* * * * * *

"The heaven of sectarians is not the heaven for me,
So doubtful its location, neither on land nor sea,
But I've a heaven on the earth,
The land that gave me birth,
A heaven of light and knowledge—oh! that's the heaven for me!
Oh! that's the heaven for me! oh! that's the heaven for me!"

Such are the songs sung, with a fervour unknown in better attended and genteeler places of worship.

The Mormons speak of us as Gentiles, yet in reality they take our creed and add to it polygamy and communism. Their belief as regards Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is almost orthodox, and if they claim to be divinely ruled and to have the power of working

miracles, do not other sects the same? Like the Quakers, they can dispense with religious forms. Like the ancient Israelites, they are a peculiar people, but what is peculiar to them, and that which constitutes the secret of their success, is this—that they preach to the poor, and wretched, and starving, that the kingdom of God has been founded upon earth, that it belongs to the saints, and that they are the saints. Man, they say, is part of the substance of God, and he will become God. He was not created by God, but existed from all eternity. He was not born in sin, and is only accountable for his own misdeeds. Angels, it seems, from what Young told Hepworth Dixon, "are the souls of bachelors and monogamists, being incapable of issue, unblessed with female companions, unfitted to reign and rule in the celestial spheres. They have failed," said Young, "in not living the patriarchal life—in not marrying many wives. An unmarried Mormon fills but a low scale in the order of things." Man being of the race of God becomes eligible for a celestial throne: his household of wives and children being his kingdom, not on earth only, but in heaven, polygamy is thus his highest duty, and most glorious privilege. In the East, polygamy does not answer. The races

with one wife there breed faster than the Turks. In the city of the Mormons, under polygamy, births are very numerous. The actual wives of Young are twelve! the twelve apostles own from three to four each. Young has forty-eight children, and all have their quivers full. The women, according to Mr. Dixon, dislike polygamy nevertheless.

In this country and among the Mormons the doctrine of polygamy is not that on which much stress is laid. Here the Mormon preaches temperance, sobriety, honesty, industry, the need of saving up money, and the advantages of emigration to Utah. In the *Millennial Star*, the organ of the community, one brother writes from Wales:—

"The Word of Wisdom is quite a text with us of late, and is producing very good effects. We see its fruits manifested among the Saints, several of the brethren leaving off tobacco and other things that are injurious to the constitution. *The tea is a matter that bothers the sisters considerably*, but in the face of this difficulty many are leaving it off, and pronouncing it of no beneficial effect in any way whatever. I think that much will be done by abstaining from those things towards clothing those children that are very thinly clad."

It is in this way that Mormonism has spread. It

has come to the poorest of the poor, and used their own language. Its phraseology is that dear to the natural heart. We are all too prone to throw our responsibility on others: It is the Lord who saves me. It is the devil who makes me bad; and it is a great help to the ignorant and uneducated, not merely to have spiritual states shadowed forth in earthly language, but to feel that, after all, heaven is here in the shape of comfortable dwellings, wives and children, raiment to wear, and a bellyfull. "This is great encouragement to the saints in their pilgrimages here in old Babylon, and stimulates them to more diligence in building up the kingdom of God, and delivering themselves from the yoke of tyranny and oppression, to enjoy the liberty of the people of God in the valleys of the mountains." Thus writes one of the elders with reference to certain manifestations of the gift of tongues; but I quote the passage here as applicable in an eminent degree, and as illustrating the religious phraseology, affected no doubt for certain ends by the Mormons. The kingdom of God, for instance, of the theologians may be difficult of apprehension to the illiterate and the rude; but if it means to me a good house and good living in Utah, it at once assumes an attractive form. If tolive in

England is to live in Babylon, of course it is my duty to emigrate; and if Brigham Young is the Lord's deputy on earth, then to disobey his call is an act of sin. So degraded are many of our brethren and sisters in this Christian land, where we have one parson at the least in every parish, that they are utterly unable to contemplate anything apart from its accidental forms. Their God is a God of parts and passions; their religion is one of sensation; their heaven a loss of physical pains and the presence of physical delights; they become at once an easy prey to the Mormonite preacher when for ten pounds he offers them the realization of their hopes, not at the end of life, but now, and tells them that in the Land of the Saints they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ADVANCED RELIGIONISTS.

The Church of Progress.

AT length, if I am to believe what I hear and see, the religious problem of the age has been solved, and I am presented with a form of worship which is in accordance with the discoveries of science and the dignity of man. In St. George's Hall, Langham Place, this new association meets; its president is Baxter Langley, Esq. It dispenses with prayer, and with the reading of the Bible, but instead there is a performance of sacred music by a choir of a hundred voices, with solos sung by professional ladies and gentlemen specially engaged, and then the President himself, smiling and buoyant as if it were an election meeting, as chairman, performs many solos on his own account. In short, as a paper lying before me says, "Everything will be done to make the service delightful, whilst instruction will be secured by a popular lecture each

evening from some gentleman eminent in science, literature, or art."

It seems to be a speciality of this Church of Progress that it disappears in summer altogether. It is only in the winter time that its doors are thrown open—not at all to the poor and needy, but to those who can pay. Is not this a little hard? Life is short, and the disciple of progress may well mourn that for him half the year exists in vain. Then, again, this Church of Progress, as much as the oldest and most-abused Churches of Christendom, makes very rigorous requirements on the pocket. Sixpence is the minimum paid. If you would hear comfortably you must pay a shilling. If you would have a seat where you can can see and hear still more comfortably you must shell out half-a-crown. Now, if a man goes with his wife and family, it is obvious that the sum he will have to pay will be, if he have but a scanty income, no small consideration. It is true that a reduction is made if you take tickets for the course, but what I find fault with is that the casual poor have no chance of being benefited by this new gospel—that it does not appeal to them—that it ignores them altogether. I may hear the greatest of Dissenting preachers, I may sit under deans and bishops—nay, I may listen

to the finished accents of an archbishop—without putting my hand in my pocket, but for the lecture at St. George's Hall, and the sacred minstrelsy there, I must at the least pay sixpence. The sum is a small one, but it has a tendency to narrow the Church and to limit its influence—it must keep outside many who otherwise would worship there. Why should the Church of Progress only appeal to the man with sixpence in his pocket? Is it only the capitalist whose soul is worth looking after? For common people will any old-wife's fable do?

A more serious fault may be found with the Church of Progress. "We are not animated by any spirit of antagonism," they say; "and as we propose to occupy a new field of utility, we see no reason why our assemblies should be regarded with hostility by other bodies." "Our religion is positive and constructive, not negative and aggressive." "Our Church is founded upon the recognition of the primary importance of human welfare; and its purpose will be to develop the power of philanthropy by education in the truths of science and philosophy, and by the elevating influence of the highest and purest art." What Protestant Church cannot say the same? As

to art, whence does the Church of Progress get its music, which perhaps is its chief attraction, but from the Churches which it tells us are losing their hold upon the minds of the people? It rears philanthropy: what was Peabody? It talks of philosophy: what were such philosophers as Sir David Brewster or Professor Faraday? Equally delusive is its denial of antagonism. It is founded for those "whose religious ideas find no suitable exponent in any of the existing Churches." The existing Churches more or less appeal to the Bible, and to Christ as Master, and place before the mind as consolation, or warning, or allurement, the splendours and the terrors of a world to come. In the new Church all this is set on one side. Science, not dogma, is to be the teacher, and they sing—

> "Reason and love! thy kingdom come,
> Oh, Church of endless ages rise!
> Till fairer shines our mortal home
> Than heavens we sought beyond the skies."

Is it true to say that between this new light and the old there is no antagonism? Is it honest to say, as they do in the address already referred to, "we ask no one to adopt or deny any of the creeds of the Churches. We shall endeavour to promulgate truth,

and truth is always Divine"? Is it not clear that no one can join the Church of Progress unless he has ceased to believe in the creeds of the Churches? that it is impossible to believe in Christ and Baxter Langley as well? When Pilate said unto the Jews, "Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?" none but an idiot would have said there was no antagonism between the two. Again, it may be asked, by what right do these "earnest, conscientious men and women" in Langham Place call themselves a Church? Is it for the sake of deceiving the public? To teach art, or science, or literature, is not religion. Why, then, define as a Church people who meet on a Sunday to hear lectures on science, literature, and art? Undoubtedly, people may do worse on a Sunday night, but in listening to such lectures they have no right to say they are at church.

Mr. George Jacob Holyoake is also one of their lecturers; and if he be not antagonistic, what is he? Of all irrepressible men Mr. Holyoake is undoubtedly the most so. You meet him everywhere. Not a social science meeting, nor a political gathering, nor a philosophical discussion exists within reach of London but he is present at it, to take part in its discussions

as the exponent of the views, and feelings, and desires of the British working man. If London is demonstrative, as when a Garibaldi appears upon the stage, foremost of those who meet to do him honour is Mr. Holyoake. In the House of Commons he is similarly prominent. In the Speaker's gallery or in the lobby you may see him all night long, here speaking to a member, there listening to one as if the care of all the country rested on his shoulders. I don't fancy Mr. Holyoake is the great man he takes himself to be. I deny his right to be the exponent of the class of whom he condescends to be the ornament and shield. I admit his boundless activity, his wonderful talent for intrusion, the cleverness of his talk. I admit, too, the energy with which in the course of a now extended career he has travelled the land, with a view to convince his fellow-men that there is no future, that he who says there is but repeats the old worn-out fiction of the priests, and that it is for this world rather than the next that we must labour and strive. Undoubtedly for Mr. Holyoake some extenuation must be made. A man may well doubt the Christianity which instead of removing his religious doubts throws him into gaol for the crime of expressing them. Nevertheless, I may doubt, if not the sincerity,—for about

that there can be no question—at any rate the truth and wisdom of his creed; and may, after all, prefer the light of the Gospel to that which he asks me to admire. I may admit that there have been quacks, and impostors, and charlatans in the religious world —that the Church has fearfully failed in its mission —that, armed with the sword of the State, it has been often a curse and a blight—but it does not follow that the truth, of which the Church should be the living organization, has no existence, that it has no mission in this world, that the Bible is to be trampled under foot, that the Saviour is to be abolished, and that for man, instead of the narrow path and the heavenly crown, nothing is left but that he should eat, and drink, and die. Such, however, I believe, is Mr. Holyoake's Gospel. As to his utterances on Sunday when I heard him, they were of the poorest character possible. The subject was the common people; and after describing three or four classes of them, he finished with the inculcation of the by no means original idea—that they were not so bad as they seem, that we had to respect in them the humanity which, under favourable circumstances, might be developed into something better. I never heard Mr. Holyoake preach before, and I shall take care never to hear him

again. As a speaker, one of Mr. Spurgeon's rawest students would beat him hollow.

THE INDEPENDENT RELIGIOUS REFORMERS.

The Theists in London are, we are told, very numerous, and yet, till about ten years since, no steps had been taken by them to provide public buildings in which to assemble for instruction and conversation, and no church had been opened in which they could invite their friends to hear the principles of Theism explained and defended. In order to supply that want, Dr. Perfitt, a layman, resolved upon renting South Place Chapel, Finsbury Square, for the purpose of delivering lectures and discourses upon various religious topics. In 1858 the Society of Independent Religious Reformers was organized out of the hearers he had thus gathered around him. A committee was elected, rules were passed, and the following were declared to be the objects of the Society:—

1. To secure the association and co-operation of all persons who are desirous of cultivating the religious sentiment in a manner essentially free from the evil spirit of creed, from the intolerance of sectarianism, and the leaven of priestcraft; of those

persons who respect the authority of reason, and reverentially accept the decrees of conscience.

2. To discover and methodize truths connected either with the laws of nature, the progress of thought, or the lives of good men in all ages and countries, so that they may be rendered of practical value as guides to a healthy, moral, and manly life.

3. To assist, as in the performance of a religious duty, in the regeneration of society by co-operating with every organized body whose aim is to abolish superstition, ignorance, drunkenness, political injustice, or any other of the numerous evils which now afflict the community.

To carry out these ideas the noble painting gallery, built by the late Sir Benjamin West, in Newman Street, Oxford Street, was procured and fitted up. This large hall seats 1500 persons. A good organ was erected, and schools and a library were talked of. At this place, on Sunday mornings, the public are treated to what is called a free religious service, based upon the great facts and principles of intellectual Theism. In the evenings popular lectures are delivered bearing upon science, history, or religious free thought. In both cases Dr. Perfitt is the orator. On many occasions the Doctor has appeared in public. Under not very pleasant circumstances—for he had

little support—he appealed to Finsbury, but in vain, to send him into Parliament. It is clear, then, what of success the man has accomplished, or of good the man has done, has been chiefly in connexion with the Society of Independent Reformers. We were told in 1863 "the church in Newman Street is but the forerunner of hundreds which will rest upon the same foundation." Dr. Perfitt has been more than seven years in Newman Street, and quite twenty at his work. A man can do a great deal in such a space of time if he has a fluent tongue, as is abundantly illustrated, not to go beyond our age, in the careers of Father Mathew, Father Ignatius, John B. Gough, or Mr. Spurgeon. Irving did not last so long, yet, metaphorically speaking, he managed to set the Thames on fire. It is clear Dr. Perfitt has peculiarly advantageous conditions under which to work. In the first place, as his aim is—

> "To serve the truth where'er 'tis found,
> On Christian or on heathen ground"—

he has a wide field over which his oratory may range. It cannot all be barren from Dan to Beersheba. In the second place, according to the Independent Religious Reformers, the great want of our times is such as they are. "It is well known," they tell us, "that

although the orthodox religious establishments are earnestly supported, they cannot gain the hearts of the people. The intelligence of England has outgrown the old creeds and formulas. Theism is secretly approved by thousands." The time, then, is ripe for such a mission as Dr. Perfitt proposes. The hour has come, and he is the man. It is not in his negative and critical aspect that he is to be judged. In the position in that respect he has assumed there is no novelty. Unfortunately, the Church of England, like all established churches, more or less lays itself open to the most irreverent criticism. The new wine cannot be put in the old bottles. We can quite agree with him that "the majority of the clergy have no just conception of what, according to the nature of things, they are called upon to do;" that St. Paul would find himself sadly out of place were he called upon to preach to the congregation of a fashionable suburban church; and that there would indeed be a flutter and commotion raised were "the Archbishop of Canterbury, cutting himself adrift from the level of Belgravia, to stand out before men denouncing woe upon the butterflies of fashion and the Dundrearies of Parliament as Jesus denounced the Scribes and Pharisees of old." But the saying these things

does not constitute a man the founder of a new and better sect. Mr. Froude tells us "the clergyman of the nineteenth century subscribes the Thirty-nine Articles with a smile as might have been worn by Samson when his Philistine mistress bound his arms with the cords and withs." It is scarcely possible to write a bitterer thing of the clergy, yet Mr. Froude is not, so far as we are aware, an Independent Religious Reformer. Even of the Church of which such hard things may be said, and justly said, we may argue that its theory of the identity of Church and State is a noble one, and that the dream of such men as "the judicious Hooker," of Coleridge, of Dr. Arnold, is that of all who, in stately cathedral or humble conventicle, pray Sunday after Sunday to the common Father, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done upon earth as it is in heaven." Man is a religious animal; the heart is true to its old instincts. There is no peace for his soul, no rest for the sole of the foot, no shelter for him in the storm, no brightness in the cloud, no glory in the sun, no hope in life, no life in death, unless he can believe, adore, and love. But we have forgotten Dr. Perfitt. Well, we need be in no hurry. If you go to Newman Street you will find very few people

there by eleven. The exclusively religious service, as one of the hearers informed us it was, generally commences at a quarter past, where in the large hall about a hundred may be collected together, the majority, of course, males, chiefly of the lower section, I should imagine, of the middle class. There is music; then the Doctor reads a chapter of the Bible, and takes it to pieces; then there is more music; then a prayer, and a half-hour's sermon, from a regular text, according to the fashion of the orthodox, but generally coming to a very unorthodox conclusion. Indeed, the former come off hardly at the Doctor's hands. He demolished them as easily as if they were so many men of straw; President Edwards, Richard Baxter, Mr. Spurgeon, the apostles, and their great Teacher, all look very small by the side of the clear, logical, learned, fluent, sarcastic, infallible Doctor, who is the heir of all the ages under the sun; who talks of Zoroaster, and Vedas, and Shasters; who is as familiar with Brahma and Buddha as if he had assisted at their birth, and who knows what's o'clock in Sanscrit better than you or I, my good sir, in ordinary English. After the sermon comes the collection, and the congregational dinner-hour, for the sale of the beer for which, the neighbouring publics open just as the Independent

Religious Reformers, exhausted by the Doctor's omniscience, require the refreshing fluid.

"Hae, sirs!" said an elderly female in a remote part of Scotland, as for the first time she saw a black man; "hae, sirs, what canna be done for the penny!" Assuredly some such feeling must be entertained by the listener who for the first time hears Dr. Perfitt in his rostrum in Cambridge Hall. For a pound a year you may have this pleasure every Sunday, and become one of the Independent Reformers. What more can man desire?

SOUTH PLACE, FINSBURY SQUARE.

The religion of humanity has been for a time dominant in South Place, Finsbury Square. Its oldest and original teacher in connexion with the place was the late W. Johnson Fox, M.P., a popular writer and eloquent orator, who did much in his day and generation on behalf of freedom in trade, in politics, and religion, and did it well. Nor did he labour in vain as regards himself. Born in an humble position, he became a student at Homerton College and an orthodox Dissenter. In a little while he joined the Unitarians, and then left them for a freer and fuller religious creed and form of worship. He had many friends.

His letters, signed "Publicola," in the *Weekly Dispatch,* were the delight of the working classes; and his Anti-Corn-law orations charmed all, and there were tens of thousands who had the privilege of listening to them. He was returned to Parliament by the electors of Oldham, and a monument erected to his memory there still perpetuates his name. He died at a ripe old age, ever having preserved the character of an independent and honourable man. As a religious teacher he was no extraordinary success. It was rarely indeed that South Place was very full. Of course, the hearers were the very *élite* of the human race. Wherever you go—especially among sects not particularly orthodox or popular—the men and women with whom you come in contact are no ordinary men and women. By a happy dispensation of Providence they fail to see themselves as others see them, and are as firmly convinced of their own intellectual superiority over a benighted British public as they are of the truth of their principles and of their ultimate success.

"There is a religion of humanity," said Mr. Fox, "though not enshrined in articles and creeds, though it is not to be read merely in sacred books, and yet it may be read in all wherever they have anything in

them of truth and moral beauty,—a religion of humanity which goes deeper than all because it belongs to the essentials of our moral and intellectual constitution, and not to mere external accidents, the proof of which is not in historical agreement or metaphysical deduction, but in our own conscience and consciousness,—a religion of humanity which unites and blends all other religions, and makes one the men whose hearts are sincere, and whose characters are true, and good, and harmonious, whatever may be the deductions of their minds or their external profession,—a religion of humanity which cannot perish in the overthrow of altars or the fall of temples, which survives them all, and which, were every derived form of religion obliterated from the face of the earth, would recreate religion as the spring recreates the fruits and flowers of the soul, bidding it bloom again in beauty, bear again its rich fruits of utility, and fashion for itself such forms and modes of expression as may best agree with the progressive condition of mankind."

It was in accordance with these ideas that the Sunday morning services in South Place were carried on.

After Mr. Fox came Mr. Ierson, and a nearer approximation to regular Unitarianism. But the place did not prosper; there were far too many empty benches. He was succeeded by a gentleman formerly

a Baptist minister, but who had outgrown his sect, and for a little while there was harmony and progress. Again there was an interregnum. "Seekers are," said old Oliver Cromwell, "next best to finders." In London, especially in these unsettled days of free inquiry, are many such, and to such the pulpit of South Place was freely offered. I do not fancy as a rule seekers are good preachers. To say anything effectually you must have something to say. To make others weep you must weep yourself. With mere negations you can never sway the minds or influence the lives of men. In orthodox places of worship there is often much of dreariness. The clergyman whose heart is not in his work is a miserable spectacle for gods and men, but the dreariness of heterodoxy is infinitely greater; and of all things under the sun the most miserable in the clerical way is the sight of a would-be philosopher feebly diluting or expanding, as the case may be, windy platitudes or transcendental moonshine. Under such an infliction, as it may well be imagined, South Place did not flourish greatly. At length, in due course, a man appeared to continue the work which Mr. Fox had originated. His name is Mr. M. D. Conway. I believe he is of American origin, and

evidently under him the cause is in a prosperous state. When I say prosperous, the term is not to be understood as it would be in orthodox circles. The latter class of religionists, when they say that a place is prosperous imply by the use of such language that a place of worship is well filled; that men are turned from sin to holiness, from serving the devil to serving God, that the place is a centre of religious life and activity, and that all, young and old, rich and poor, are to the best of their power and means co-operating in Christian work. Prosperity in this sense cannot be predicated of South Place. Its doors are only opened once a week. There is no religious, or educational, or philanthropical agency connected with the chapel; but there are more attendants than there were, and that encourages Mr. Conway and his friends. Indeed, there is a talk amongst them of establishing a Sunday-school. At the same time it seems to me that the class of people who go to South Place are not socially or intellectually what they were in Mr. Fox's time—when the Cortaulds would come up all the way from Braintree to hear Mr. Fox, when City lawyers like the late Mr. Ashurst, and City magnates like the late Mr. Dillon, were amongst the audience; when on a Sunday morning might be seen

there such men as Sir J. Bowring, or Macready, or Charles Dickens, and others equally well known to fame. They left when Mr. Fox left. I believe Mr. P. Taylor, M.P., still keeps up a connexion, more or less fitful and uncertain, with the place. Sir Sydney Waterlow also still retains a couple of sittings, but he is rarely there. Nevertheless, the congregation has greatly increased; the chapel is quite three parts full. Still they use the little book of hymns and anthems selected by Mr. Fox; and the musical part of the service, always a great matter at South Place, is as well conducted and as attractive as ever.

Mr. Conway is a very advanced thinker. The character of his preaching and praying is purely theistic. He wars with dogmas in every form. It may be a wing to-day, a fetter to-morrow. For him there are no sacred books, or rather he places them all on an equality. For his motto he goes to India, and quotes the Brahma Somaj. In this respect he is a true follower of the late Mr. Fox, whose fascinating oratory owed very little of its charm to that which orthodox Unitarians or orthodox Christians hold highest and holiest; whose aim was more to pull down than to build up, and who had a greater faculty for the exposition of Christian fallacies than for the

enunciating of truths and principles needful to humanity in its hour of temptation, distress, danger, or death. Few have his exquisite humour, his power of sarcasm, his acquaintance with modern literature, his copious command of polished language, his expressive yet calm delivery, his gentleness almost as touching as that of woman; but that which was lacking in him often made men his inferiors in intellect, his superiors in the art of arousing the spiritually dead, or in giving to the moral wastes in our midst the vigour, the beauty, the fertility of life.

THE SECULARISTS.

It is a sign of the times when Infidelity visits the workshop or the factory, and challenges the admiration of the men in fustian—the men whose hard labours and horny hands have helped to make England what it is, and who in an increasing ratio are making their influence felt on the Exchange where capital seeks investment, in the ancient halls where the teachers of the next generation are training, in the study of the political philosopher, in Parliaments where practical people assemble to legislate after their necessarily imperfect fashion for the general weal. It is said of Sir Godfrey Kneller that he

was deeply shocked at hearing a common labourer invoking imprecations on his own head. Some such feeling must be entertained by the old-fashioned, scholarly sceptics at all times met with in highly intellectual communities. Religion was a good thing for the poor; it taught them to know their place, to be humble, industrious, and not to murmur when deprived by human agency of the rights to which all are born, or when by the same agency they were made to bear innumerable wrongs. For such religion was intended; and for such considerations it was right and proper that it should be accepted by society—sanctioned by the law—its ministers rewarded and salaried by the State. It was under the influence of some such feeling that Napoleon the Great is reported to have said, if there were no God, it would be necessary to invent one; and in a proportionate manner do the philosophers feel alarm and indignation when the working man, for whom such trouble has been taken,—for whom religion has, as it were, been discovered,—for whom an Establishment, the most richly endowed with this world's goods in Christendom, rejoices to call itself the poor man's Church,—turns round, and, in his coarse, rough way, says, "Ladies and gentlemen, I am much obliged to you.

I see your little game. Pray don't take any trouble on my account. Please to leave me to go to the bad in my own way. ' Give me the right to the free inquiry you claim for yourselves, and don't quarrel with me on account of its results." Really it seems to me the Secularist has the best of it. I may regret his conclusions. I cannot blame his independent spirit.

Of the men who talk in this way it may be said, at any rate as regards the metropolis, Robert Dale Owen was the teacher and apostle. Owen was the first to proclaim to the masses that there was no such thing as moral responsibility; that a man's character was formed for him partly by nature at his birth, and partly by the external influences to which he was exposed. As man, there was for him no choice of right or wrong. Any religion, and emphatically that of Christ, which proceeds upon the supposition that man can lay hold of eternal life, can accept the offer of God's mercy, can believe and live, is false and to be rejected with disdain. Owen was a man of blameless life—a man who made great sacrifices of wealth, and time, and labour, on account of his ideas. As his last apologist has well stated, "his condemnation of religion was not the result of

libertine excesses, nor of a philosophical conceit, but followed honestly from the shallow theory he had adopted." Amongst the poor, ignorant, superficial denizens of our crowded cities he was hailed as the regenerator of manhood, and made many converts. Nor are they to be blamed. Owen met with an attentive hearing from such as Brougham and Bentham, Earls Liverpool and Aberdeen, Jefferson and Van Buren, the Duke of Kent and the King of Prussia; actually, we believe, he was presented at Court. It is true in his old age he became a believer in spirits, after all, and was buried in the little churchyard of Newton, Montgomeryshire, in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life; but by that time the truth or falsehood he had proclaimed had sunk into many minds, had been re-uttered by many tongues, had been commended to the working classes by no less a master of language and argument than George Jacob Holyoake. Certainly, in the hands of the latter, Owenism, under its new name of Secularism, lost none of its power. The master was apt to be egotistic—dogmatic—much given to repetition—very diffuse. Mr. Holyoake's enemies cannot conscientiously say he is that. His friends, many of them the

cleverest of London men, claim for him talents of no common order. A shop in Fleet Street was opened—the *Reasoner* was established—and Mr. Holyoake went all over the land to emancipate the human mind, spell-bound by priestcraft, and to roll back the double night of ages and of ignorance. In a little while he retired from business, the shop in Fleet Street was shut up, the *Reasoner* reasoned no more—Mr. Holyoake ceased perambulating. Still we have a genuine Apostolical succession: Mr. Bradlaugh takes up the wondrous tale, and the *National Reformer* records the triumphs of his cause. According to him, all is prosperous. Hope paints a glorious future—when man's

> "Regenerate soul from crime
> Shall yet be drawn,
> And Reason on this mortal clime
> Immortal dawn."

Yet what is the fact? The *National Reformer* costs 10*l.* a week, and it does not pay. Its readers tell us their name is legion; yet it does not pay. At any rate, it is constantly appealing to its public for support. In every workshop or factory, in all our great hives of intelligence and life, the Secularists boast their thousands. All the intelligent operative

manhood of England is, according to their own account, theirs; yet their organ—the child of a giant—is very weak on its legs, and very short of wind.

The headquarters of the Secularists is Cleveland Street, a street lying in that mass of pauperism at the rear of Tottenham Court Road Chapel. In that street there is a hall, originally erected, I believe, by Owen himself. At any rate, it is the resort of the illuminated to whom his philosophy has opened up a new moral world,—which, as regards appearances, is little better than the benighted Egypt out of which they have departed. Here you will find no free Gospel. The Secularists are determined to make the best of this world. If you wish to enter, you must pay; if you wish to show your gentility and sit near the lecturer, you must pay twopence more. Previous to the lecturer commencing, a boy goes up and down the room selling copies of the *National Reformer*, and a table at one end is devoted to the sale of publications of a similar character.

Cleveland Hall, every Sunday evening, then, is devoted to what are called Popular Free-thought Lectures. The doors open at seven, the lectures commence at half-past. The programme for the

month of August, which I have now before me, will give the reader an idea of what is meant by free thought:—

"On Sunday evening, August 2, Mr. Charles Watts —An Impartial Estimate of the Life and Teachings of the Founder of Christianity; on Sunday evening, August 9, Iconoclast (Mr. Bradlaugh)—Capital and Labour, and Trades' Unions; on Sunday evening, August 16, Mrs. Harriet Law—The Teachings and Philosophy of J. S. Mill, Esq.; on Sunday evening, August 23, Mrs. Harriet Law—The Late Robert Owen: a Tribute to His Memory, Drawn from a Comparison of Present Institutions and their Effects, with those Advocated by that Eminent Philanthropist; on Sunday evening, August 30, Mrs. Harriet Law, an Appeal to Women to Consider their Interests in Connexion with the Social, Political, and Theological Aspects of the Times."

Let me add, discussions are invited at the close of each lecture, and that, as may be anticipated, after a discussion the combatants remain of the same opinion. Nevertheless, the Secularists enjoy these discussions immensely—and no wonder, as on all such occasions they form not a majority merely, but almost the entire assembly. It is not often they find their match. Men who can meet them on a common platform are rare. A sincere Christian is shocked

and pained, and loses his temper. Every cock can crow on his own dunghill; and at Cleveland Hall the Secularists have it all their own way, and are merry at the expense of their opponents. Nor is this all; they often indulge in a style of abuse which sounds even to tolerant ears uncommonly like blasphemy. In fact, they are often needlessly antagonistic, and vulgar, and coarse.

I have said Cleveland Hall is the headquarters of the society, for there is a society of which Mr. Charles Watts is secretary. There is another hall in the City Road; lectures are also, I believe, delivered elsewhere in London on a Sunday evening, and there are at least four or five secular societies. In the summer time they have open-air lectures on a Sunday morning in different parts of London. When the writer has been at Cleveland Hall, the room has generally been half full of respectable and sharp working men, all very positive and enthusiastic. There are not many women present, but, of course, there is the irrepressible baby. The lecturers are generally the persons whose names I have already given, who occasionally vary the scene of their labours by provincial engagements. Their work, whatever it may be, has now been going on for some

years. This argues, on their part, some special fitness, and an adaptation of what they say and think to the class to whom they appeal. In this respect they set many of the clergy a good example. The people at Cleveland Hall do not call out for quarter of an hour lectures. Nor do they require anything in the way of music, or choral performances, or floral decorations, or altar lights, to make the service interesting. For children, whether they go to church or chapel, you must provide shows. For men nothing more is needed than logic and the human voice.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE IRREGULARS.

"WHAT do you think of the Ranters, Mr. Hall?" I quote from the life of the celebrated Baptist orator; "don't you think they ought to be put down?"

"I don't know enough of their conduct to say that. What do they do? Do they inculcate Antinomianism, or do they exhibit immorality in their lives?"

"Not that I know of, but they fall into very irregular practices."

"Indeed, what practices?"

"Why, sir, when they enter a village they begin to sing hymns, and they go on singing until they collect a number of people on the village green, or in some neighbouring field, and then they preach."

"Well, whether that may be prudent or expedient or not depends upon circumstances, but as yet I see no criminality."

"But you must admit, Mr. Hall, it is very irregular."

"And suppose I do admit that, what follows? Was not our Lord rebuking the Scribes and Pharisees and driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple very irregular? Was not almost all that he did in his public ministry very irregular? Was not the course of the Apostles, and of Stephen, and of many of the Evangelists, very irregular? Were not the proceedings of Calvin, Luther, and their fellow workers in the Reformation very irregular?—a complete and shocking innovation upon all the queer outdoings of the Papists? And were not the whole lives of Whitefield and Wesley very irregular lives, as you view such things? Yet how infinitely is the world indebted to all of these? No, sir, there must be something widely different from mere irregularity before I condemn."

IRREGULAR AGENCIES.

Between Churchmen and Dissenters there are bodies claiming and often receiving the support of both. The number of buildings used in London every Sunday evening for theatre services now amounts to eleven, eight of the eleven being engaged by a united committee, of which the Earl of Shaftesbury is the chairman, — viz., Astley's, Standard,

Pavilion, Royal Amphitheatre, Sadler's Wells, Britannia, and the Metropolitan and Oxford Music Halls. The other buildings are St. James's Hall and the Effingham and Victoria theatres. One result of this state of things is rather doubtful. Of the perniciousness of some of these places there can be no doubt. It may be that some of them would have been closed ere this had not the money received from the Sunday preaching made up for the losses of the week. In one year in these places 122 services were held, attended by 190,000 persons.

The London City Mission employs 361 agents. During the last year the number of visits made by them to the houses of the poor amounted to 1,987,259. The number of visits which they made to sick and dying amounted to 255,102. They gave away 6000 copies of the Bible; they circulated 2,677,901 tracts; they held more than 36,000 Bible classes and religious services indoors; they conducted 3764 out-of-door services; they induced 1296 persons to partake of the Lord's Supper, 242 backsliders to return, 608 families to begin family prayer, 863 drunkards to abstain, 141 shopkeepers to close their shops on the Sabbath, and 8297 children to attend ragged and Sunday schools.

In London there are 300 Bible women always at work; then there is the Christian community founded in the days of John Wesley; the members of it visit workhouses and lodging-houses in the East of London and preach in the open air. Last year the number of open-air services held by them amounted to 542; the number of addresses delivered, 1626; and the number of hearers, including indoors and out, 379,370. The Society also visits lodging-houses and the Juvenile Refuge, and gives free tea meetings, which, as we may imagine, are very well attended. During the past year 255,477 tracts had been distributed, and altogether it had held 8573 services.

The Open-air Mission needs also to be recorded. It is calculated that in the summer our open-air preachers address every Sunday nearly half a million of persons in the metropolis alone. It must also be remembered that of late, by the closing of public-houses, the number of idle, covetous, mischievous persons thrown on our streets is considerably increased. On Sundays it is evident that the blockage of the streets is greater than ever. In such places as Trafalgar Square, and the steam-boat piers, and in all our back streets, there are thousands of boys and men gambling and de-

moralizing one another. The Open-air Mission catches some of them, and in the lowest neighbourhoods—where the most depraved live—its agents generally receive a favourable hearing; one exception is recorded, which occurred at the Royal Exchange. Preaching last year commenced there in April, and went on with many striking instances of success till May 9, when a band of secularists, humanitarians, and infidels came to oppose,—one man reading the Koran, while the agent of the City Mission was as usual about to commence his service. On the next Sunday the opposition was still greater, being reinforced by Roman Catholics and their priests. Under these circumstances preaching was suspended, only to be reopened when the excitement and the danger of a breach of the peace shall have passed away. The Society aims at open-air preaching, special visitation, domestic visitation, and conferences for mutual intercourse. The visit to Epsom belongs to the second class of these subjects. Twenty-one agents had been there during the race week, 60,000 tracts had been given away, many addresses had been given, and a Bible-stand erected. At this latter place, on the last wet Friday when the Oaks was being run, they sheltered a couple of hundred of poor starving

wretches, and for five hours kept up preaching and praying on their account. Their service on the Sunday before the races was very interesting. On the Monday they held a service for the benefit of the gipsies, one of the speakers at which was the Dean of Ripon, better known perhaps as the Rev. Hugh M'Neile.

Of the 60,000 Arabs of London there are 20,000 in the Ragged Schools.

The Female and Domestic Bible Missions now number 230 paid agents, each with her district and lady superintendent, and expend some 11,000*l.* a year, exclusive of between 6000*l.* and 7000*l.* which is paid to it in instalments by the poor themselves for Bibles, clothes, and bedding.

The Young Men's Scripture Association has been very successful. Nearly 200 of a Sunday afternoon attend the Bible class in Aldersgate Street. It has twelve branches in different parts of the town.

Connected with no denomination are six or seven chapels or rooms, where as they meet they break bread in the morning and preach the Gospel in the evening. In addition, the Plymouth Brethren have some thirty places of worship, and their dulness and

isolation from the world, which cause them even to avoid discharging their duties as citizens as inconsistent with the spiritual life, indicate the little they need be taken into account as a religious body aiming in any way to influence the religious life of London. According to the late Mr. Buckle, good people really do very little good. I fancy this is the case as far as the Plymouth Brethren are concerned.

THE END.

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